Henrietta Murray Dunne
Feb 29th 1797

THE

LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

COMPREHENDING

AN ACCOUNT OF HIS STUDIES AND NUMEROUS WORKS, IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER;

A SERIES OF HIS EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE AND CONVERSATIONS WITH MANY EMINENT PERSONS;

AND

VARIOUS ORIGINAL PIECES OF HIS COMPOSITION, NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

THE WHOLE EXHIBITING A VIEW OF LITERATURE AND LITERARY MEN IN GREAT BRITAIN, FOR NEAR HALF A CENTURY, DURING WHICH HE FLOURISHED.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

——————*Quò fit ut* OMNIS
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
VITA SENIS.—— HORAT.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

DUBLIN:

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M,DCC,XCII.



THE

LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

ON Sunday, April 12, I found him at home before dinner; Dr. Dodd's poem, entitled "Thoughts in priſon," was lying upon his table. This appearing to me an extraordinary effort by a man who was in Newgate for a capital crime, I was deſirous to hear Johnſon's opinion of it: to my ſurprize, he told me he had not read a line of it. I took up the book and read a paſſage to him. JOHNSON. "Pretty well, if you are previouſly diſpoſed to like them." I read another paſſage, with which he was better pleaſed. He then took the book into his own hands, and having looked at the prayer at the end of it, he ſaid, "What *evidence* 1778. Ætat. 69.

1778. Ætat. 69. is there that this was compoſed the night before he ſuffered. I do not believe it." He then read aloud where he prays for the King, &c. and obſerved, "Sir, do you think that a man the night before he is to be hanged cares for the ſucceſſion of a royal family? Though he *may* have compoſed this prayer then. A man who has been canting all his life may cant to the laſt. And yet a man who has been refuſed a pardon after ſo much petitioning, would hardly be praying thus fervently for the King."

He and I, and Mrs. Williams, went to dine with the Reverend Dr. Percy. Talking of Goldſmith, Johnſon ſaid, he was very envious. I defended him, by obſerving that he owned it frankly upon all occaſions. JOHNSON. "Sir, you are enforcing the charge. He had ſo much envy that he could not conceal it. He was ſo full of it that he overflowed. He talked of it to be ſure often enough. Now, Sir, what a man avows, he is not aſhamed to think; though many a man thinks, what he is aſhamed to avow. We are all envious naturally; but by checking envy we get the better of it. So we are all thieves naturally; a child always tries to get at what it wants, the neareſt way; by good inſtruction and good habits this is cured, till a man has not even an inclination to ſeize what is another's; has no ſtruggle with himſelf about it."

And here I ſhall record a ſcene of two much heat between Dr. Johnſon and Dr. Percy, which I ſhould have ſuppreſſed, were it not that it gave occaſion to diſplay the truely tender and benevolent heart of Johnſon, who as ſoon as he found a friend was at all hurt by any thing which he had "ſaid in his wrath," was not only

only prompt and desirous to be reconciled, but exerted himself to make ample reparation. 1778. Ætat. 69.

Books of Travels having been mentioned, Johnson praised Pennant very highly, as he did at Dunvegan, in the Isle of Sky*. Dr. Percy still holding himself as the heir male of the ancient Percies, and having the warmest and most dutiful attachment to the noble house of Northumberland, could not sit quietly and hear a man praised, who had spoken disrespectfully of Alnwick-Castle, and the Duke's pleasure-grounds, especially as he thought meanly of his travels. He therefore opposed Johnson eagerly. JOHNSON. "Pennant in what he has said of Alnwick, has done what he intended; he has made you very angry." PERCY. "He has said the garden is *trim*, which is representing it like a citizen's parterre, when the truth is, there is a very large extent of fine turf and gravel walks." JOHNSON. "According to your own account, Sir, Pennant is right. It *is* trim. Here is grass cut close, and gravel rolled smooth. Is not that trim? The extent is nothing against that; a mile may be as trim as a square yard. Your extent puts me in mind of the citizens' enlarged dinner, two pieces of roast-beef, and two puddings. There is no variety, no mind exerted in laying out the ground, no trees." PERCY. "He pretends to give the natural history of Northumberland, and yet takes no notice of the immense number of trees planted there of late." JOHNSON. "That, Sir, has nothing to do with the *natural* history; that is *civil* history. A man who gives the natural history of the oak, is not to tell how many oaks have been planted in this

* "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," edit. 3, p. 221.

1778. Ætat. 69. place or that. A man who gives the natural hiſtory of the cow, is not to tell how many cows are milked at Iſlington. The animal is the ſame, whether milked in the Park or at Iſlington. PERCY. "Pennant does not deſcribe well; a carrier who goes along the ſide of Lochlomond would deſcribe it better." JOHNSON. "I think he deſcribes very well." PERCY. "I travelled after him." JOHNSON. "And I travelled after him." PERCY. "But, my good friend, you are ſhort-ſighted, and do not ſee ſo well as I do." I wondered at Dr. Percy's venturing thus. Dr. Johnſon ſaid nothing at the time; but inflammable particles were collecting for a cloud to burſt. In a little while Dr. Percy ſaid ſomething more in diſparagement of Pennant. JOHNSON. (pointedly) "This is the reſentment of a narrow mind, becauſe he did not find every thing in Northumberland. PERCY. (feeling the ſtroke) "Sir, you may be as rude as you pleaſe." JOHNSON. "Hold, Sir! Don't talk of rudeneſs; remember, Sir, you told me (puffing hard with paſſion ſtruggling for a vent) I was ſhort-ſighted. We have done with civility. We are to be as rude as we pleaſe." PERCY. "Upon my honour, Sir, I did not mean to be uncivil." JOHNSON. "I cannot ſay ſo, Sir; for I *did* mean to be uncivil, thinking *you* had been uncivil. Dr. Percy roſe, ran up to him, and taking him by the hand, aſſured him affectionately that his meaning had been miſunderſtood; upon which a reconciliation inſtantly took place. JOHNSON. "My dear Sir, I am willing you ſhall *hang* Pennant." PERCY. (reſuming the former ſubject) "Pennant complains that the helmet is not hung out to invite to the hall of hoſpitality. Now I never heard that it was a cuſtom to hang out a *helmet*." JOHNSON. "Hang him

him up, hang him up." BOSWELL. (humouring the joke) "Hang out his ſkull inſtead of a helmet, and you may drink ale out of it in your hall of Odin, as he is your enemy; that will be truly ancient. *There* will be "Northern Antiquities." JOHNSON. "He's a *Whig*, Sir; a *ſad dog* (ſmiling at his own violent expreſſions, merely for *political* difference of opinion). But he's the beſt traveller I ever read; he obſerves more things than any one elſe does." 1778. Ætat. 69.

I could not help thinking that this was too high praiſe of a writer who traverſed a wide extent of country in ſuch haſte, that he could put together only curt frittered fragments of his own, and afterwards procured ſupplemental intelligence from parochial miniſters, and others not the beſt qualified or moſt impartial narrators, whoſe ungenerous prejudice againſt the houſe of Stuart glares in miſrepreſentation; a writer, who at beſt treats merely of ſuperficial objects, and ſhews no philoſophical inveſtigation of character and manners, ſuch as Johnſon has exhibited in his maſterly "Journey," over part of the ſame ground; and who it ſhould ſeem from a deſire of ingratiating himſelf with the Scotch, has flattered the people of North-Britain ſo inordinately and with ſo little diſcrimination, that the judicious and candid amongſt them muſt be diſguſted, while they value more the plain, juſt, yet kindly report of Johnſon.

We had a calm after the ſtorm, ſtaid the evening and ſupt, and were pleaſant and gay. But Dr. Percy told me he was very uneaſy at what had paſſed; for there was a gentleman there who had recently been admitted into the confidence of the Northumberland family, to whom he hoped to appear more reſpectable, by ſhowing him how intimate he was with the great Dr. Johnſon

1778. Ætat. 69. Johnſon; and now the gentleman would go away with an impreſſion much to his diſadvantage, as if Johnſon treated him with diſregard, which might do him an eſſential injury. He begged I would mention this to Dr. Johnſon, which I afterwards did. His obſervation upon it was, "This comes of *ſtratagem*; had he told me that he wiſhed to appear to advantage before that gentleman, he ſhould have been at the top of the houſe all the time." He ſpoke of Dr. Percy in the handſomeſt terms. "Then, Sir, (ſaid I,) may I be allowed to ſuggeſt a mode by which you may effectually counteract any unfavourable report of what paſſed. I will write a letter to you upon the ſubject of the unlucky conteſt of that day, and you will be kind enough to put in writing as an anſwer to that letter, what you have now ſaid, and in ſhort all that you can ſay to Dr. Percy's advantage; and as Lord Percy is to dine with us at General Paoli's ſoon, I will take an opportunity to read the correſpondence in his Lordſhip's preſence. This friendly ſcheme was accordingly carried into execution without Dr. Percy's knowledge.—Johnſon's letter was ſtudiouſly framed to place Dr. Percy's unqueſtionable merit in the faireſt point of view; and I contrived that Lord Percy ſhould hear the correſpondence, by introducing it at General Paoli's, as an inſtance of Dr. Johnſon's kind diſpoſition towards one in whom his Lordſhip was intereſted Thus our friend Percy was raiſed higher in the eſtimation of thoſe by whom he wiſhed moſt to be regarded. I breakfaſted the day after with him, and informed him of my ſcheme, and its happy completion, for which he thanked me in the warmeſt terms, and was highly delighted with Dr. Johnſon's letter in his praiſe, of which I gave him a copy. He

ſaid,

ſaid, "I would rather have this than degrees from all the Univerſities in Europe. It will be for me, and my children and grand-children." 1778. Ætat. 69. Dr. Johnſon having afterwards aſked me if I had given him a copy of it, and being told I had, was offended, and inſiſted that I ſhould get it back, which I did. As, however, he did not deſire me to deſtroy either the original or the copy, or forbid me to let it be ſeen, I think myſelf at liberty to apply to it his general declaration to me concerning his other letters—"That he did not chooſe they ſhould be publiſhed in his life-time; but had no objection to their appearing after his death." I ſhall therefore inſert this kindly correſpondence, having faithfully narrated the circumſtances accompanying it.

To Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I BEG leave to adreſs you in behalf of our friend Dr. Percy, who was much hurt by what you ſaid to him that day we dined at his houſe*; when, in the courſe of the diſpute as to Pennant's merit as a traveller, you told Percy that 'he had the reſentment of a narrow mind againſt Pennant, becauſe he did not find every thing in Northumberland.' Percy is ſenſible that you did not mean to injure him; but he is vexed to think that your behaviour to him upon that occaſion may be interpreted as a proof that he is deſpiſed by you, which I know is not the caſe. I have told him, that the charge of

* Sunday, April 12, 1778.

being

1778. Ætat. 69. being narrow-minded was only as to the particular point in queſtion; and that he had the merit of being a martyr to his noble family.

"Earl Percy is to dine with General Paoli next Friday; and I ſhould be ſincerely glad to have it in my power to ſatisfy his Lordſhip how well you think of Dr. Percy, who, I find, apprehends that your good opinion of him may be of very eſſential conſequence; and who aſſures me, that he has the higheſt reſpect and the warmeſt affection for you.

"I have only to add, that my ſuggeſting this occaſion for the exerciſe of your candour and generoſity, is altogether unknown to Dr. Percy, and proceeds from my good-will towards him, and my perſuaſion that you will be happy to do him an eſſential kindneſs. I am, more and more my dear, Sir,

"Your moſt faithful

"And affectionate humble ſervant,

JAMES BOSWELL."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"SIR,

"THE debate betwen Dr. Percy and me is one of thoſe fooliſh controverſies, which begin upon a queſtion of which neither party cares how it is decided, and which is, nevertheleſs, continued to acrimony, by the vanity with which every man reſiſts confutation. Dr. Percy's warmth proceeded from a cauſe which, perhaps, does him more honour than he could have derived from juſter criticiſm. His abhorrence of Pennant proceeded from his opinion that Pennant had wantonly and indecently cenſured his patron. His anger made him reſolve that for

for having been once wrong, he never ſhould be right. Pennant has much in his notions that I do not like; but ſtill I think him a very intelligent traveller. If Percy is really offended, I am ſorry; for he is a man whom I never knew to offend any one. He is a man very willing to learn, and very able to teach; a man, out of whoſe company I never go without having learned ſomething. It is ſure that he vexes me ſometimes, but I am afraid it is by making me feel my own ignorance. So much extenſion of mind, and ſo much minute accuracy of enquiry, if you ſurvey your whole circle of acquaintance, you will find ſo ſcarce, if you find it at all, that you will value Percy by compariſon. Lord Hailes is ſomewhat like him: but Lord Hailes does not, perhaps, go beyond him in reſearch; and I do not know that he equals him in elegance. Percy's attention to poetry has given grace and ſplendour to his ſtudies of antiquity. A mere antiquarian is a rugged being. 1788. Ætat. 69.

"Upon the whole, you ſee that what I might ſay in ſport or petulance to him, is very conſiſtent with full conviction of his merit.

I am, dear Sir,
Your moſt, &c.

"April 23, 1778. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the Reverend Dr. PERCY, *Northumberland Houſe.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I WROTE to Dr. Johnſon on the ſubject of the *Pennantian* controverſy; and have received from him an anſwer which will delight you. I read it yeſterday to Dr. Robertſon, at the exhibition; and at dinner to Lord Percy, General

1778. Ætat. 69. General Oglethorpe, &c. who dined with us at General Paoli's; who was alſo a witneſs to the high *teſtimony* to your honour.

"General Paoli deſires the favour of your company next Tueſday to dinner, to meet Dr. Johnſon. If I can, I will call on you to-day. I am, with ſincere regard,

"Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

JAMES BOSWELL."

"South Audley-ſtreet, April 25.

On Monday, April 13, I dined with Johnſon at Mr. Langton's, where were Dr. Porteus, then Biſhop of Cheſter, now of London, and Dr. Stinton. He was at firſt in a very ſilent frame. Before dinner he ſaid nothing but—"Pretty baby," to one of the children. Langton ſaid very well to me afterwards, that he could repeat Johnſon's converſation before dinner, as Johnſon had ſaid that he could repeat a complete chapter of "The Natural Hiſtory of Iceland," from the Daniſh of *Horrebow*, the whole of which was exactly thus:

"CHAP. LXXII. *Concerning ſnakes.*

"There are no ſnakes to be met with throughout the whole iſland."

At dinner we talked of another mode in the news-papers of giving modern characters in ſentences from the claſſics, and of the paſſage

"*Parcus Deorum cultor, et infrequens,*
"*Inſanientis dum ſapientiæ*
"*Conſultus erro, nunc retrorsùm*
"*Vela dare, atque iterare curſus*
"*Cogor relictos:*"

being

being well applied to Soame Jennyns; who, after having wandered in the wilds of infidelity, had returned to the Chriſtian faith. Mr. Langton aſked Johnſon as to the propriety of *ſapientiæ conſultus*. JOHNSON. "Though *conſultus* was primarily an adjective, like *amicus* it came to be uſed as a ſubſtantive. So we have *Juris-conſultus*, a conſult in law." 1778. Ætat. 69.

We talked of the ſtyles of different painters, and how certainly a connoiſſeur could diſtinguiſh them. I aſked if there was as clear a difference of ſtyles in language as in painting, or even as in hand-writing, ſo that the compoſition of every individual may be diſtinguiſhed? JOHNSON. "Yes. Thoſe who have a ſtyle of eminent excellence, ſuch as Dryden and Milton, can always be diſtinguiſhed." I had no doubt of this —but what I wanted to know was, whether there was really a peculiar ſtyle to every man whatever, as there is certainly a peculiar hand-writing, a peculiar countenance, not widely different in many, yet always enough to be diſtinctive:

"——— —— *Facies non omnibus una*
"*Nec diverſa tamen.*"

The Biſhop thought not; and ſaid, he ſuppoſed that many pieces in Dodſley's collection of poems, though all very pretty, had nothing appropriated in their ſtyle, and in that particular could not be at all diſtinguiſhed. JOHNSON.— "Why, Sir, I think every man whatever has a peculiar ſtyle, which may be diſcovered by nice examination and compariſon with others: but a man muſt write a great deal to make his ſtyle obviouſly diſcernible. As logicians ſay, this appropriation of ſtyle is infinite *in poteſtate*, limited *in actu*."

Mr.

1778. Ætat. 69. Mr. Topham Beauclerk came in the evening and he and Dr. Johnſon and I ſtaid to ſupper.—It was mentioned that Dr. Dodd had once wiſhed to be a member of THE LITERARY CLUB. JOHNSON. "I ſhould be ſorry if any of our club were hanged. I will not ſay but ſome of them deſerve it." BEAUCLERK. (ſuppoſing this to be aimed at perſons for whom he had at that time a wonderful fancy, which, however, did not laſt long,) was irritated, and eagerly ſaid, "You, Sir, have a friend (naming him) who deſerves to be hanged; for he ſpeaks behind their backs againſt thoſe with whom he lives on the beſt terms, and attacks them in the newspapers. *He* certainly ought to be *kicked*."—JOHNSON. "Sir, we all do this in ſome degree, '*Veniam petimus damuſque viciſſim.*' To be ſure it may be done ſo much that a man may deſerve to be kicked." BEAUCLERK. "He is very malignant." JOHNSON. "No, Sir; he is not malignant. He is miſchievous, if you will. He would do no man an eſſential injury; he may indeed, love to make ſport of people by vexing their vanity. I, however, once knew an old gentleman who was abſolutely malignant. He really wiſhed evil to others, and rejoiced at it." BOSWELL. "The gentleman, Mr. Beauclerk, againſt whom you are ſo violent, is I know, a man of good principles." BEAUCLERK. "Then he does not wear them out in practice."

Dr. Johnſon, who as I have obſerved before, delighted in diſcrimination of character, and having a maſterly knowledge of human nature, was willing to take men as they are, imperfect, and with a mixture of good and bad qualities, I ſuppoſe thought he had ſaid enough in defence of his friend; of whoſe merits, notwithſtanding

ing his exceptionable points he, had a juſt value, and added no more on the ſubject. 1778. Ætat. 69

On Tueſday, April 14, I dined with him at General Oglethorpe's, with General Paoli and Mr. Langton. General Oglethorpe declaimed againſt luxury. JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, every ſtate of ſociety is as luxurious as it can be. Men always take the beſt they can get." OGLETHORPE. "But the beſt depends much upon ourſelves; and if we can be as well ſatisfied with plain things, we are in the wrong to accuſtom our palates to what is high-ſeaſoned and expenſive. What ſays Addiſon in his 'Cato,' ſpeaking of the Numidian:

'Coarſe are his meals, the fortune of the chace,
'Admid the running ſtream he ſlakes his thirſt,
'Toils all the day, and at the approach of night,
'On the firſt friendly bank he throws him down,
'Or reſts his head upon a rock till morn;
'And if the following day he chance to find
'A new repaſt, or an untaſted ſpring,
'Bleſſes his ſtars! and thinks it luxury!'

Let us have *that* kind of luxury, Sir, if you will." JOHNSON. "But hold, Sir; to be merely ſatisfied is not enough. It is in refinement and elegance that the civilized man differs from the ſavage. A great part of our induſtry, and all our ingenuity is exerciſed in procuring pleaſure; and, Sir, a hungry man has not the ſame pleaſure in eating a plain dinner, that a hungry man has in eating a luxurious dinner. You ſee I put the caſe fairly. A hungry man may have as much, nay, more pleaſure in eating a plain dinner, than a man grown faſtidious has in eating a luxurious dinner. But I ſuppoſe the man who decides between the two dinners, to be equally a hungry man.

Talking

1778. Talking of different governments. JOHNSON "The more contracted that power is, the more
Ætat. 69. eaſily it is deſtroyed. A country governed by a deſpot is an inverted cone. Government there cannot be ſo firm as when it reſts upon a broad baſis gradually contracted, as the government of Great Britain, which is founded on the parliament, then is in the privy-council, then in the King." BOSWELL. "Power when contracted into the perſon of a deſpot may be eaſily deſtroyed, as the prince may be cut off. So Caligula wiſhed that the people of Rome had but one neck, that he might cut them off at a blow."—OGLETHORPE. "It was of the ſenate he wiſhed that. The Senate by its uſurpation controuled both the Emperor and the people. And don't you think that we ſee too much of that in our own parliament?"

Dr. Johnſon endeavoured to trace the etymology of Maccaronick verſes, which he thought were of Italian invention from Maccaroni; but on being informed that this would infer that they were the moſt common and eaſy verſes, maccaroni being the moſt ordinary and ſimple food, he was at a loſs; for he ſaid, "He rather ſhould have ſuppoſed it to import in its primitive ſignification, a compoſition of ſeveral things; for Maccaronick verſes, are verſes made out of a mixture of different languages, that is, of one language with the termination of another." I ſuppoſe there is almoſt no language in any country where there is any learning, in which that motley ludicrous ſpecies of compoſition may not be found. It is particularly droll in Low Dutch. The "*Polemomiddinia*" of Drummond of Hawthornden, in which there is a jumble of many languages moulded, as if it were, all in Latin, is well known. Mr. Langton made

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us laugh heartily at one in the Grecian mould, by Joſhua Barnes, in which are to be found ſuch comical *Anglo-Elleniſms* as κλυββοισιν ϛαυχτεν They were banged with clubs. 1778. Ætat. 69.

On Wedneſday, April 15, I dined with Dr. Johnſon at Mr. Dilly's, and was in high ſpirits, for I had been a good part of the morning with Mr. Orme, the able and elegant hiſtorian of Hindoſtan, who expreſſed a high admiration of Johnſon. "I do not care (ſaid he,) on what ſubject Johnſon talks; but I love better to hear him talk than any body. He either gives you new thoughts, or a new colouring. It is a ſhame to the nation that he has not been more liberally rewarded. Had I been George the Third, and thought as he did about America, I would have given Johnſon three hundred a year for his 'Taxation no Tyranny' alone." I repeated this, and Johnſon was much pleaſed with ſuch praiſe from ſuch a man as Orme.

At Mr. Dilly's to-day were Mrs. Knowles the ingenious Quaker-lady*, Miſs Seward, the poeteſs of Litchfield, the Rev. Dr. Mayo, and the Rev. Mr. Beresford, Tutor to the Duke of Bedford. Before dinner Dr. Johnſon ſeized upon Mr. Charles Sheridan's "Account of the late Revolution in Sweden," and ſeemed to read it ravenouſly as if he devoured it, which was to all appearance his method of ſtudying. "He knows how to read better than any one (ſaid Mrs. Knowles); he gets at the ſubſtance of a book directly; he tears out the heart of it." He kept it wrapt up in the table-cloth in his lap dur-

* Dr. Johnſon, deſcribing her needle-work in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, Vol. I. p. 326, uſes the learned word *futile*; which Mrs. Thrale has miſtaken, and made the phraſe injurious by writing "*futile* pictures."

ing

1778. Ætat. 69. ing the time of dinner, from an avidity to have one entertainment in readineſs when he ſhould have finiſhed another, reſembling (if I may uſe ſo coarſe a ſimile) a dog who holds a bone in his paws in reſerve, while he eats ſomething elſe which has been thrown to him.

The ſubject of cookery having been very naturally introduced at a table where Johnſon, who boaſted of the niceneſs of his palate, owned that "he always found a good dinner," he ſaid, I could write a better book of cookery than has ever yet been written; it ſhould be a book upon philoſophical principles. Pharmacy is now made much more ſimple. Cookery may be made ſo too. A preſcription which is now compounded of five ingredients, had formerly fifty in it. So in cookery, if the nature of the ingredients be well known, much fewer will do.—Then as you cannot make bad meat good, I would tell what is the beſt butcher's meat, the beſt beef, the beſt pieces; how to chooſe young fowls; the proper ſeaſon of different vegetables; and then how to roaſt and boil, and compound." DILLY. "Mrs. Glaſſe's 'Cookery,' which is the beſt, was written by Dr. Hill. Half the *trade* knows this." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir. This ſhews how much better the ſubject of Cookery may be treated by a philoſopher. I doubt if the book be written by Dr. Hill; for, in Mrs. Glaſſe's 'Cookery,' which I have looked into, ſalt-petre and ſal-prunella are ſpoken of as different ſubſtances, whereas ſal-prunella is only ſalt-petre burnt on charcoal, and Hill could not be ignorant of this. However, as the greateſt part of ſuch a book is made by tranſcription, this miſtake may have been careleſsly adopted. But you ſhall ſee what a book of Cookery I ſhall make! I ſhall agree with Mr. Dilly for the copy-right

py-right-right." MISS SEWARD. "That would be Hercules with the diſtaff indeed." JOHNSON. "No, Madam. Women can ſpin very well; but they cannot make a good book of Cookery.' 1778. Ætat. 69.

JOHNSON. "O! Mr. Dilly—you muſt know that an Engliſh Benedictine Monk at Paris has tranſlated 'The Duke of Berwick's Memoirs,' from the original French, and has ſent them to me to ſell. I offered them to Strahan, who ſent them back with this anſwer:—'That the firſt book he had publiſhed was the Duke of Berwick's Life, by which he had loſt; and he hated the name.'—Now I honeſtly tell you, that Strahan has refuſed them; but I alſo honeſtly tell you, that he did it upon no principle, for he never looked into them." DILLY. "Are they well tranſlated, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, very well—in a ſtyle very current and very clear. I have written to the Benedictine to give me an anſwer upon two points—What evidence is there that the letters are authentick?—For if they are not authentick they are nothing. And how long will it be before the original French is publiſhed? For if the French edition is not to appear for a conſiderable time, the tranſlation will be almoſt as valuable as an original book. They will make two volumes in octavo; and I have undertaken to correct every ſheet as it comes from the preſs." Mr. Dilly deſired to ſee them, and ſaid he would ſend for them. He aſked Dr. Johnſon if he would write a preface to them. JOHNSON. "No, Sir. The Benedictines were very kind to me, and I'll do what I undertook to do; but I will not mingle my name with them. I am to gain nothing by them. I'll turn them looſe upon the world, and let them take their chance." Dr. MAYO. "Pray

1778. Ætat. 69. Sir, are Ganganelli's letters authentick?"—JOHNSON. "No, Sir. Voltaire put the ſame queſtion to the editor of them, that I did to Macpherſon—Where are the originals?"

Mrs. Knowles affected to complain that men had much more liberty allowed them than women. JOHNSON. "Why, Madam, women have all the liberty they ſhould wiſh to have.—We have all the labour and the danger, and the women all the advantage. We go to ſea, we build houſes, we do every thing, in ſhort, to pay our court to the women." MRS. KNOWLES. "The Doctor reaſons very wittily, but not convincingly. Now, take the inſtance of building—the maſon's wife, if ſhe is ever ſeen in liquor, is ruined. The maſon may get himſelf drunk as often as he pleaſes, with little loſs of character; nay, may let his wife and children ſtarve." JOHNSON. "Madam, you muſt conſider, if the maſon does get himſelf drunk, and let his wife and children ſtarve, the pariſh will oblige him to find ſecurity for their maintenance. We have different modes of reſtraining evil. Stocks for the men, a ducking ſtool for the women, and a pound for beaſts. If we require more perfection from women than from ourſelves, it is doing them honour. And women have not the ſame temptations that we have: they may always live in virtuous company; men muſt mix in the world indiſcriminately. If a woman has no inclination to do what is wrong, being ſecured from it is no reſtraint to her. I am at liberty to walk into the Thames; but if I were to try it, my friends would reſtrain me in Bedlam, and I ſhould be obliged to them." MRS. KNOWLES. "Still, Doctor, I cannot help thinking it a hardſhip that more indulgence is allowed to men than to women. It gives a ſuperiority to men,

to

to which I do not ſee how they are entitled."— JOHNSON. "It is plain, Madam, one or other muſt have the ſuperiority. As Shakſpeare ſays, 'If two men ride on horſeback, one muſt ride behind." DILLY. "I ſuppoſe, Sir, Mrs. Knowles would have them to ride in panniers, one on each ſide." JOHNSON. "Then, Sir, the horſe would throw them both." MRS. KNOWLES. "Well, I hope that in another world the ſexes will be equal." BOSWELL. "That is being too ambitious, Madam. *We* might as well deſire to be equal with the angels. We ſhall all, I hope, be happy in a future ſtate, but we muſt not expect to be all happy in the ſame degree. It is enough if we be happy according to our ſeveral capacities. A worthy carman will get to Heaven as well as Sir Iſaac Newton. Yet, tho' equally good, they will not have the ſame degrees of happineſs. "JOHNSON. "Probably not." 1778. Ætat. 69.

Upon this ſubject I had once before ſounded him, by mentioning the late Reverend Mr. Brown, of Utrecht's image; that a great and ſmall glaſs, though equally full, did not hold an equal quantity; which he threw out to refute David Hume's ſaying, that a little miſs, going to dance at a ball, in a fine new dreſs, was as happy as a great orator, after having made an eloquent and applauded ſpeech. After ſome thought, Johnſon ſaid, "I come over to the parſon." As an inſtance of coincidence of thinking, Mr. Dilly told me, that Dr. King, a late diſſenting miniſter in London, ſaid to him, upon the happineſs in a future ſtate of good men of different capacities, "A pail does not hold ſo much as a tub; but, if it be equally full, it has no reaſon to complain. Every Saint in Heaven will have as much happineſs as he can hold." Mr. Dilly thought this a clear, though

1778. Ætat. 69. a familiar illuſtration of the phraſe, "One ſtar differeth from another in brightneſs."

Dr. Mayo having aſked Johnſon's opinion of Soame Jennyns's "View of the internal Evidence of the Chriſtian Religion;"—Johnſon. "I think it a pretty book; not very theological indeed; and there ſeems to be an affectation of eaſe and careleſſneſs, as if it were not ſuitable to his character to be very ſerious about the matter." Boswell. "He may have intended this to introduce his book the better among genteel people, who might be unwilling to read too grave a treatiſe. There is a general levity in the age. We have phyſicians now with bag-wigs; may we not have airy divines, at leaſt ſomewhat leſs ſolemn in their appearance than they uſed to be?" Johnson. "Jennyns might mean as you ſay." Boswell. "*You* ſhould like his book Mrs. Knowles, as it maintains, as your *friends* do, that courage is not a Chriſtian virtue." Mrs. Knowles. "Yes, indeed, I like him there; but I cannot agree with him, that friendſhip is not a chriſtian virtue." Johnson. "Why, Madam, ſtrictly ſpeaking, he is right. All friendſhip is preferring the intereſt of a friend, to the neglect, or, perhaps, againſt the intereſt of others; ſo that an old Greek ſaid, 'He that has *friends* has *no friend*.' Now chriſtianity recommends univerſal benevolence, to conſider all men as our brethren, which is contrary to the virtue of friendſhip, as deſcribed by the ancient philoſophers. Surely, Madam, your ſect muſt approve of this; for, you call all men *friends*." Mrs. Knowles. "We are commanded to do good to all men, 'but eſpecially to them who are of the houſhold of Faith."—Johnson. "Well, Madam, The houſhold of Faith is wide enough." Mrs. Knowles.—"But,

" But, Doctor, our Saviour had twelve Apoſtles, yet there was *one* whom he *loved*. John was called 'the diſciple whom JESUS loved."—— JOHNSON. (with eyes ſparkling benignantly) " Very well, indeed, Madam. You have ſaid very well." BOSWELL. " A fine application. Pray, Sir, had you ever thought of it?" JOHNSON. " I had not, Sir." 1788. Ætat. 69.

From this amiable and pleaſing ſubject, he, I know not how or why, made a ſudden tranſition to one upon which he was a violent aggreſſor; for he ſaid, " I am willing to love all mankind, *except an American*:" and his inflammable corruption burſting into horrid fire, he " breathed out threatenings and ſlaughter;" calling them, " Raſcals—Robbers—Pirates;" and exclaiming, he'd " burn and deſtroy them." Miſs Seward, looking to him with mild but ſteady aſtoniſhment, ſaid, " Sir, this is an inſtance that we are always moſt violent againſt thoſe whom we have injured."—He was irritated ſtill more by this delicate and keen reproach; and roared out another tremendous volley, which one might fancy could be heard acroſs the Atlantick. During this tempeſt I ſat in great uneaſineſs, lamenting his heat of temper; till, by degrees, I diverted his attention to other topicks.

DR. MAYO. (to Dr. Johnſon) " Pray, Sir, have you read Edwards, of New England, on Grace?" JOHNSON. " No, Sir." BOSWELL. " It puzzled me ſo much as to the freedom of the human will, by ſtating, with wonderful acute ingenuity, our being actuated by a ſeries of motives which we cannot reſiſt, that the only relief I had was to forget it." MAYO. " But he makes the proper diſtinction between moral and phyſical neceſſity. BOSWELL. " Alas, Sir, they come both to the ſame thing. You may be bound as hard

1778. Ætat. 69. hard by chains when covered by leather, as when the iron appears. The argument for the moral neceſſity of human actions is always, I obſerve, fortified by ſuppoſing univerſal preſcience to be one of the attributes of the Deity." JOHNSON. "You are ſurer that you are free, than you are of preſcience; you are ſurer that you can lift up your finger or not as you pleaſe, than you are of any concluſion from a deduction of reaſoning. But let us conſider a little the objection from preſcience. It is certain I am either to go home to-night or not; that does not prevent my freedom." BOSWELL. "That it is certain you are *either* to go home or not, does not prevent your freedom; becauſe the liberty of choice between the two is compatible with that certainty. But if *one* of theſe events be certain *now*, you have no *future* power of volition. If it be certain you are to go home to-night, you *muſt* go home." JOHNSON. "If I am well acquainted with a man, I can judge with great probability how he will act in any caſe, without his being reſtrained by my judging. GOD may have this probability encreaſed to certainty." BOSWELL. "When it is increaſed to *certainty* fredom ceaſes, becauſe that cannot be certainly foreknown which is not certain at the time; but if it be certain at the time, it is a contradiction in terms to maintain that there can be afterwards any *contingency* dependent upon the exerciſe of will or any thing elſe." JOHNSON. "All theory is againſt the freedom of the will; all experience for it."—I did not puſh the ſubject any farther. I was glad to find him ſo mild in diſcuſſing a queſtion of the moſt abſtract nature, which is involved with theological tenets, which he generally would not ſuffer to be in any degree oppoſed*.

He

* If any of my readers are diſturbed by this thorny queſtion

He as uſual defended luxury; "You cannot ſpend money in luxury without doing good to the poor. Nay, you do more good to them by ſpending it in luxury than by giving it; for by ſpending it in luxury you make them exert induſtry, whereas by giving it you keep them idle. I own, indeed, there may be more virtue in giving it immediately in charity than in ſpending it in luxury; though there may be a pride in that too." Miſs Seward aſked if this was not Mandeville's doctrine of "private vices public benefits." JOHNSON. "The fallacy of that book is, that Mandeville defines neither vices nor benefits. He reckons among vices every thing that gives pleaſure. He takes the narroweſt ſyſtem of morality, monaſtic morality, which holds pleaſure itſelf to be a vice, ſuch as eating ſalt with our fiſh, becauſe it makes it taſte better; and he reckons wealth as a public benefit, which is by no means always true. Pleaſure of itſelf is not a vice. Having a garden, which we all know to be perfectly innocent, is a great pleaſure. At the ſame time, in this ſtate of being there are many pleaſures vices, which however are ſo immediately agreeable that we can hardly abſtain from them. The happineſs of Heaven will be, that pleaſure and virtue will be perfectly conſiſtent. Mandeville puts the caſe of a man who gets drunk at an alehouſe; and ſays it is a public benefit, becauſe ſo much money is got by it to the public. But it muſt be conſidered, that all the good gained by this, through the gradation of alehouſe-keeper, brewer, maltſter, and farmer, is overbalanced by

1778. Ætat. 69.

tion, I beg leave to recommend to them Letter 69 of Monteſquieu's *Lettres Perſannes*; and the late Mr. John Palmer of Iſlington's Anſwer to Dr. Prieſtly's mechanical arguments for what he calls "Philoſophical Neceſſity."

the

1778. Ætat. 69. the evil cauſed to the man and his family by his getting drunk. This is the way to try what is vicious, by aſcertaining whether more evil than good is produced by it upon the whole, which is the caſe in all vice. It may happen that good is produced by vice, but not as vice; for inſtance, a robber may take money from its owner, and give it to one who will make a better uſe of it. Here is good produced; but not by the robbery as robbery, but as tranſlation of property. I read Mandeville forty, or I believe fifty years ago. He did not puzzle me; he opened my views into real life very much. No, it is clear that the happineſs of ſociety depends upon virtue. In Sparta theft was allowed by general conſent; theft, therefore, was *there* not a crime, but then there was no ſecurity; and what a life muſt they have had when there was no ſecurity. Without truth there muſt be a diſſolution of ſociety. As it is, there is ſo little truth that we are almoſt afraid to truſt our ears; but how ſhould we be, if falſehood were multiplied ten times? Society is held together by communication and information; and I remember this remark of Sir Thomas Brown's, 'Do the devils lie? No; for then Hell could not ſubſiſt."

Talking of Miſs ———, a literary lady, he ſaid, "I was obliged to ſpeak to Miſs Reynolds, to let her know that I deſired ſhe would not flatter me ſo much." Somebody now obſerved, "She flatters Garrick." JOHNSON. "She is in the right to flatter Garrick. She is in the right for two reaſons; firſt, becauſe ſhe has the world with her, who have been praiſing Garrick theſe thirty years; and ſecondly, becauſe ſhe is rewarded for it by Garrick. Why ſhould ſhe flatter *me?* I can do nothing for her. Let her carry her praiſe to a better market. (Then turning to Mrs. Knowles) You, Madam, have been

been flattering me all the evening; I wiſh you would give Boſwell a little now. If you knew his merit as well as I do, you would ſay a great deal; he is the beſt travelling companion in the world."

Somebody mentioned the Reverend Mr. Maſon's proſecution of Mr. Murray, the bookſeller, for having inſerted in a collection of "Gray's Poems," only fifty lines, of which Mr. Maſon had ſtill the excluſive property, under the ſtatute of Queen Anne; and that Mr. Maſon had perſevered, notwithſtanding his being requeſted to name his own terms of compenſation*. Johnſon ſignified his diſpleaſure at Mr. Maſon's conduct very ſtrongly; but added, by way of ſhewing that he was not ſurprized at it, "Maſon's a whig." MRS. KNOWLES. (not hearing diſtinctly) "What! a Prig, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Worſe, Madam; a whig! But he is both."

I expreſſed a horrour at the thought of death. MRS. KNOWLES." "Nay, thou ſhould'ſt not have a horrour for what is the gate of life."—— JOHNSON. (ſtanding upon the hearth rolling about, with a ſerious, ſolemn, and ſomewhat gloomy air) "No rational man can die without uneaſy apprehenſion. MRS. KNOWLES. "The ſcriptures tell us, 'The righteous ſhall have *hope* in his death." JOHNSON. "Yes, Madam; that is, he ſhall not have deſpair. But, conſider, his hope of ſalvation muſt be founded on the terms on which it is promiſed, that the mediation of our SAVIOUR ſhall be applied to us, namely obedience; and where obedience has failed, then as ſuppletory to it, repentance.—But what man can ſay that his obedience has been ſuch, as he would approve of in another,

* See "A Letter to W. Maſon, A. M. from J. Murray, Book-ſeller in London;" 2d edition, p. 29.

or

1778. Ætat. 69. or even in himſelf upon cloſe examination, or that his repentance has not been ſuch as to require being repented of? No man can be ſure that his obedience and repentance will obtain ſalvation." MRS. KNOWLES. "But divine intimation of acceptance may be made to the ſoul." JOHNSON. "Madam, it may; but I ſhould not think the better of a man who ſhould tell me on his death-bed he was ſure of ſalvation. A man cannot be ſure himſelf that he has divine intimation of acceptance; much leſs can he make others ſure that he has it." "BOSWELL. "Then, Sir, we muſt be contented to acknowledge that death is a terrible thing." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir. I have made no approaches to a ſtate which can look on it as not terrible." MRS. KNOWLES. (ſeeming to enjoy a pleaſing ſerenity in the perſuaſion of benignant divine light) "Does not St. Paul ſay, 'I have fought the good fight of faith, I have finiſhed my courſe; henceforth is laid up for me a crown of life'?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Madam; but here was a man inſpired, a man who had been converted by ſupernatural interpoſition." BOSWELL. "In proſpect death is dreadful; but in fact we find that people die eaſy." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, moſt people have not *thought* much of the matter, ſo cannot *ſay* much, and it is ſuppoſed they die eaſy. Few believe it certain they are then to die; and thoſe who do, ſet themſelves to behave with reſolution, as a man does who is going to be hanged. He is not the leſs unwilling to be hanged." MISS SEWARD. "There is one mode of the fear of death which is certainly abſurd; and that is the dread of annihilation, which is only a pleaſing ſleep without a dream." JOHNSON. "It is neither pleaſing, nor ſleep; it is nothing. Now mere exiſtence is ſo much better than nothing that one would

would rather exiſt even in pain, than not exiſt." 1778.
Boswell. "If annihilation be nothing, then Ætat. 69.
exiſting in pain is not a comparative ſtate, but is a poſitive evil, which I cannot think we ſhould chooſe. I muſt be allowed to differ here; and it would leſſen the hope of a future ſtate founded on the argument that the Supreme Being, who is good as he is great, will hereafter compenſate for our preſent ſufferings in this life. For if exiſtence, ſuch as we have it here, be comparatively a good, we have no reaſon to complain, though no more of it ſhould be given to us. But if our only ſtate of exiſtence were in this world, then we might with ſome reaſon complain that we are ſo diſſatisfied with our enjoyments compared with our deſires." Johnson. "The lady confounds annihilation, which is nothing, with the apprehenſion of it, which is dreadful. It is in the apprehenſion of it that the horrour of annihilation conſiſts."

Of John Weſley he ſaid, "He can talk well on any ſubject." Boswell. "Pray, Sir, what has he made of his ſtory of a ghoſt?" Johnson. "Why, Sir, he believes it; but not on ſufficient authority. He did not take time enough to examine the girl. It was at Newcaſtle, where the ghoſt was ſaid to have appeared to a young woman ſeveral times, mentioning ſomething about the right to an old houſe, adviſing application to be made to an attorney, which was done; and, at the ſame time, ſaying the attorney would do nothing, which proved to be the fact. 'This (ſays John) is a proof that a ghoſt knows our thoughts.' Now (laughing) it is not neceſſary to know our thoughts to tell that an attorney will ſometimes do nothing. Charles Weſley, who is a more ſtationary man, does not believe the ſtory. I am ſorry that John did not take

1778. take more pains to inquire into the evidence for
Ætat. 69. it." Miss Seward. (with an incredulous ſmile, "What, Sir! about a ghoſt?" Johnson. (with ſolemn vehemence) "Yes, Madam: this is a queſtion which, after five thouſand years, is yet undecided; a queſtion, whether in theology or philoſophy, one of the moſt important that can come before the human underſtanding."

Mrs. Knowles mentioned, as a proſelyte to Quakeriſm, Miſs ———, a young lady well known to Dr. Johnſon, for whom he had ſhewn much affection; while ſhe ever had, and ſtill retained, a great reſpect for him. Mrs. Knowles at the ſame time took an opportunity of letting him know "that the amiable young creature was ſorry at finding that he was offended at her leaving the church of England and embracing a ſimpler faith;" and, in the gentleſt and moſt perſuaſive manner, ſolicited his kind indulgence for what was ſincerely a matter of conſcience. Johnson. (frowning very angrily) "Madam, ſhe is an odious wench. She could not have any proper conviction that it was her duty to change her religion, which is the moſt important of all ſubjects, and ſhould be ſtudied with all care, and with all the helps we can get. She knew no more of the Church which ſhe left, and that which ſhe embraced, than ſhe did of the difference between the Copernican and Ptolemaick ſyſtems." Mrs. Knowles. "She had the New Teſtament before her." Johnson. "Madam, ſhe could not underſtand the New Teſtament, the moſt difficult book in the world, for which the ſtudy of a life is required." Mrs. Knowles. "It is clear as to eſſentials." Johnson. "But not as to controverſial points. The heathens were eaſily converted, becauſe they had nothing to give up; but we ought not, without

without very ſtrong conviction indeed, to deſert the religion in which we have been educated.— That is the religion given you, the religion in which it may be ſaid Providence has placed you. If you live conſcientiouſly in that religion, you may be ſafe. But error is dangerous indeed, if you err when you chooſe a religion for yourſelf." MRS. KNOWLES. "Muſt we then go by implicit faith?" JOHNSON. "Why, Madam, the greateſt part of our knowledge is implicit faith; and as to religion, have we heard all that a diſciple of Confucius, all that a Mahometan can ſay for himſelf?" He then roſe again into a paſſion, and attacked the young proſelyte in the ſevereſt terms of reproach, ſo that both the ladies ſeemed to be much ſhocked. 1778. Æt. 69.

We remained together till it was pretty late. Notwithſtanding occaſional explosions of violence, we were all delighted upon the whole with Johnſon. I compared him at this time to a warm Weſt-Indian climate, where you have a bright ſun, quick vegetation, luxurious foliage, luſcious fruits; but where the ſame heat ſometimes produces thunder, lightening, and earthquakes in a terrible degree.

April 17, being Good-Friday, I waited on Johnſon as uſual. I obſerved at breakfaſt that although it was a part of his abſtemious diſcipline on this moſt ſolemn faſt, to take no milk in his tea, yet when Mrs. Deſmoulins inadvertently poured it in, he did not reject it. I talked of the ſtrange indeciſion of mind, and imbecillity in the common occurrences of life, which we may obſerve in ſome people. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I am in the habit of getting others to do things for me." BOSWELL. "What, Sir! have you that weakneſs?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir.—

But

1778. Ætat. 69. But I always think afterwards I ſhould have done better for myſelf."

I told him that at a gentleman's houſe where there was thought to be ſuch extravagance or bad management, that he was living much beyond his income, his lady had objected to the cutting of a pickled mango, and that I had taken an opportunity to aſk the price of it, and found it was only two ſhillings; ſo here was a very poor ſaving. JOHNSON. "Sir, that is the blundering œconomy of a narrow underſtanding. It is ſtopping one hole in a ſieve."

I expreſſed ſome inclination to publiſh an account of my *Travels* upon the continent of Europe, for which I had a variety of materials collected. JOHNSON. "I do not ſay, Sir, you may not publiſh your travels; but I give you my opinion, that you would leſſen yourſelf by it. What can you tell of countries ſo well known as thoſe upon the continent of Europe, which you have viſited?" BOSWELL. "But I can give an entertaining narrative, with many incidents, anecdotes, *jeux d'eſprit*, and remarks, ſo as to make very pleaſant reading." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, moſt modern travellers in Europe who have publiſhed their travels, have been laughed at: I would not have you added to the number*. The world is now not contented to be merely entertained by a traveller's narrative; they want to learn ſomething. Now ſome of my friends aſked me why I did not give ſome account of my travels in France. The reaſon is plain; intelligent readers had ſeen more of France than I had. *You* might have liked my travels in France, and THE CLUB might have liked them; but

* I believe, however, I ſhall follow my own opinion; for the world has ſhewn a very flattering partiality to my writings, on many occaſions.

upon

upon the whole there would have been more ridicule than good produced by them." BOSWELL. "I cannot agree with you, Sir. People would like to read what you ſay of any thing. Suppoſe a face had been painted by fifty painters before, ſtill we love to ſee it done by Sir Joſhua." JOHNSON. "True, Sir, but Sir Joſhua cannot paint a face when he has not time to look on it." BOSWELL. "Sir, a ſketch of any ſort by him is valuable. And, Sir, to talk to you in your own ſtyle (raiſing my voice, and ſhaking my head,) you *ſhould* have given us your Travels in France. I am *ſure* I am right, and *there's an end on't.*" 1778. Ætat. 69.

I ſaid to him that it was certainly true as my friend Dempſter had obſerved in his letter to me upon the ſubject, that a great part of what was in his "Journey to the Weſtern Iſlands of Scotland," had been in his mind before he left London. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, Sir, the topics were; and books of travels will be good in proportion to what a man has previouſly in his mind; his knowing what to obſerve; his power of contraſting one mode of life with another. As the Spaniſh proverb ſays,' He, who would bring home the wealth of the Indies, muſt carry the wealth of the Indies with him.' So it is in travelling; a man muſt carry knowledge with him if he would bring home knowledge." BOSWELL. "The proverb, I ſuppoſe, Sir, means, he muſt carry a large ſtock with him to trade with. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir."

It was a delightful day: as we walked to St. Clement's church, I again remarked that Fleet-ſtreet was the moſt cheerful ſcene in the world. "Fleet-ſtreet (ſaid I,) is in my mind more delightful than Tempe." JOHNSON. "Aye, Sir; but let it be compared with Mull."

There was a very numerous congregation today at St. Clement's church, which Dr. Johnſon ſaid he obſerved with pleaſure.

And

1778. Æt. 69. And now I am to give a pretty full account of one of the moſt curious incidents of Johnſon's life, of which he himſelf has made the following minute on this day: "In my return from church, I was accoſted by Edwards, an old fellow collegian, who had not ſeen me ſince 1729. He knew me, and aſked if I remembered one Edwards; I did not at firſt recollect the name, but gradually as we walked along, recovered it, and told him a converſation that had paſſed at an alehouſe between us. My purpoſe is to continue our acquaintance*."

It was in Butcher's-row that this meeting happened. Mr. Edwards, who was a decent looking elderly man in grey clothes, and a wig of many curls, accoſted Johnſon with familiar confidence, knowing who he was, while Johnſon returned his ſalutations with a courteous formality, as to a ſtranger. But as ſoon as Edwards had brought to his recollection their having been at Pembroke College together nine-and-thirty years ago, he ſeemed much pleaſed, aſked where he lived, and ſaid he ſhould be glad to ſee him in Bolt-Court. EDWARDS.—"Ah, Sir! we are old men now." JOHNSON. (who never liked to think of being old) "Don't let us diſcourage one another." EDWARDS.—"Why, Doctor you look ſtout and hearty, I am happy to ſee you ſo; for the news-papers told us you were very ill." JOHNSON. "Aye, Sir, they are always telling lies of *us old fellows*."

Wiſhing to be preſent at more of ſo ſingular a converſation as that between two fellow collegians, who had lived near forty years in London without ever having chanced to meet, I whiſpered to Mr. Edwards that Dr. Johnſon was going home, and that he had better accompany him now. So Edwards walked along with

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 164.

with us, I eagerly aſſiſting to keep up the converſation. Mr. Edwards informed Dr. Johnſon that he had practiſed long as a ſolicitor in Chancery, but that he now lived in the country upon a little farm about ſixty acres, juſt by Stevenage in Hertfordſhire, and that he came to London (to Barnard's Inn, No. 6,) generally twice a week. Johnſon appearing to be in a reverie, Mr. Edwards addreſſed himſelf to me, and expatiated on the pleaſure of living in the country. BOSWELL. "I have no notion of this, Sir. What you have to entertain you, is, I think, exhauſted in half an hour." EDWARDS. "What! don't you love to have hope realiſed? I ſee my graſs and my corn, and my trees growing. Now, for inſtance, I am curious to ſee if this froſt has not nipped my fruit trees." JOHNSON. (who we did not imagine was attending) "You find, Sir, you have fears as well as hopes."—So well did he ſee the whole, when another ſaw but the half of a ſubject. 1778. Ætat. 69.

When we got to Dr. Johnſon's houſe, and were ſeated in his library, the dialogue went on admirably. EDWARDS. "Sir, I remember you would not let us ſay *prodigious* at College. For even then, Sir, (turning to me,) he was delicate in language, and we all feared him*." JOHNSON. (to Edwards) "From your having practiſed the law long, Sir, I preſume you muſt be rich." EDWARDS. "No, Sir, I got a good deal of money; but I had a number of poor relations to whom I gave a great part of it." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have been rich in the

* Johnſon ſaid to me afterwards, "Sir, they reſpected me for my literature; and yet it was not great but by compariſon. Sir, it is amazing how little literature there is in the world."

1778. Ætat. 69. moſt valuable ſenſe of the word."——— "EDWARDS. "But I ſhall not die rich." JOHNSON. "Nay, ſure, Sir, it is better to *live* rich than to *die* rich." EDWARDS. "I wiſh I had continued at College." JOHNSON. "Why do you wiſh that, Sir!" EDWARDS. "Becauſe I think I ſhould have had a much eaſier life than mine has been. I ſhould have been a parſon, and had a good living, like Bloxam and ſeveral others, and lived comfortably." JOHNSON. "Sir, the life of a parſon, of a conſcientious clergyman, is not eaſy. I have always conſidered a clergyman as the father of a larger family than he is able to maintain. I would rather have Chancery ſuits upon my hands than the cure of ſouls. No, Sir, I do not envy a clergyman's life as an eaſy life, nor do I envy the clergyman who makes it an eaſy life."—Here taking himſelf up all of a ſudden, he exclaimed, "O! Mr. Edwards! I'll convince you that I recollect you. Do you remember our drinking together at an alehouſe near Pembroke gate. At that time you told me of the Eton boy, who, when verſes on our Saviour's turning water into wine were preſcribed as an exerciſe, brought up a ſingle line, and was highly admired:

'*Vidit et erubuit lympha pudica* DEUM'.

and I told you of another fine line in 'Camden's Remains' an eulogy upon one of our Kings, who was ſucceeded by his ſon, a prince of equal merit:

'*Mira cano, Sol occubuit, nox nulla ſecuta eſt.*'

EDWARDS. "You are a philoſopher, Dr. Johnſon. I have tried too, in my time to be a philoſopher; but I don't know how, cheerfulneſs

neſs was always breaking in."—Mr. Burke, Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Mr. Courtenay, Mr. Malone, and, indeed, all the eminent men to whom I have mentioned this, have thought it an exquiſite trait of character. The truth is, that philoſophy, like religion, is too generally ſuppoſed to be hard and ſevere, at leaſt ſo grave as to exclude all gaiety. 1778. Ætat. 69.

EDWARDS. "I have been twice married, Doctor. You, I ſuppoſe, have never known what it was to have a wife." JOHNSON. "Sir, I have known what it was to have a wife, and (in a ſolemn tender faultering tone) I have known what it was to *loſe a wife*.—It had almoſt broke my heart."

EDWARDS. "How do you live, Sir? For my part, I muſt have my regular meals, and a glaſs of good wine. I find I require it." JOHNSON, "I now drink no wine, Sir. Early in life I drank wine: for many years I drank none. I then for ſome years drank a great deal." EDWARDS. "Some hogſheads, I warrant you." JOHNSON. "I then had a ſevere illneſs, and left it off, and I have never begun it again. I never felt any difference upon myſelf from eating one thing rather than another, nor from one kind of weather rather than another. There are people, I believe, who feel a difference; but I am not one of them. And as to regular meals, I have faſted from the Sunday's dinner to the Tueſday's dinner, without any inconvenience. I believe it is beſt to eat juſt as one is hungry; but a man who is in buſineſs, or a man who has a family, muſt have ſtated meals. I am a ſtraggler. I may leave this town and go to Grand Cairo, without being miſſed here or obſerved there." EDWARDS. "Do'nt you eat ſupper, Sir?" JOHNSON.

1778. Ætat. 69. "No, Sir," EDWARDS. "For my part, now, I consider supper as a turnpike through which one must pass, in order to get to bed*.

JOHNSON. "You are a lawyer, Mr. Edwards. Lawyers know life practically. A bookish man should always have them to converse with. They have what he wants." EDWARDS." "I am grown old: I am sixty-five." JOHNSON. "I shall be sixty-eight next birth-day. Come, Sir, drink water, and put in for a hundred."

Mr. Edwards mentioned a gentleman who had left his whole fortune to Pembroke College. JOHNSON. "Whether to leave one's whole fortune to a College be right, must depend upon circumstances. I would leave the interest of the fortune I bequeathed to a College to my relations or my friends, for their lives. It is the same thing to a College, which is a permanent society, whether it gets the money now or twenty years hence; and I would wish to make my relations or friends feel the benefit of it."

This interview confirmed my opinion of Johnson's most humane and benevolent heart. His cordial and placid behaviour to an old fellow-collegian, a man so different from himself; and his telling him that he would go down to his farm and visit him, shewed a kindness of disposition very rare at an advanced age. He observed, "how wonderful it was that they had both been in London almost forty years, with out having ever once met, and both walkers in the street too!" Mr. Edwards, when going away, again recurred to his consciousness of se-

* I am not absolutely sure but this was my own suggestion, though it is truly in the character of Edwards.

nility,

nility, and looking full in Johnſon's face, ſaid to him, "You'll find in Dr. Young, 1778. Ætat. 69.

"O my coevals, remnants of yourſelves"

Johnſon did not reliſh this at all; but ſhook his head with impatience. Edwards walked off, ſeemingly highly pleaſed with the honour of having been thus noticed by Dr. Johnſon. When he was gone, I ſaid to Johnſon, that I thought him but a weak man. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, Sir. Here is a man who has paſſed through life without experience: yet I would rather have him with me than a more ſenſible man who will not talk readily. This man is always willing to ſay what he has to ſay." Yet Dr. Johnſon had himſelf by no means that willingneſs which he praiſed ſo much, and I think ſo juſtly; for who has not felt the painful effect of the dreary void, when there is a total ſilence in a company for any length of time, or which is as bad, or perhaps worſe, when the converſation is with difficulty kept up by a perpetual effort?

Johnſon once obſerved to me, "Tom Tyers deſcribed me the beſt: 'Sir, (ſaid he) you are like a ghoſt: you never ſpeak till you are ſpoken to."

The gentleman whom he thus familiarly mentioned was Mr. Thomas Tyers, ſon of Mr. Jonathan Tyers, the founder of that excellent place of publick amuſement, Vauxhall Gardens, which muſt ever be an eſtate to its proprietor, as it is peculiarly adapted to the taſte of the Engliſh nation; there being a mixture of curious ſhew, gay exhibition—muſick, vocal and inſtrumental, not too refined for the general ear—for all which only a ſhilling is paid—and, though laſt not leaſt, good eating and drinking for thoſe who chooſe to purchaſe that regale. Mr. Thomas Tyers was

1778. Ætat. 69. was bred to the law; but having a handſome fortune, vivacity of temper, and eccentricity of mind, he could not confine himſelf to the regularity of practice. He therefore ran about the world with a pleaſant careleſſneſs, amuſing every body by his deſultory converſation. He abounded in anecdote, but was not ſufficiently attentive to accuracy. I therefore cannot venture to avail myſelf much of a biographical ſketch of Johnſon which he publiſhed, being one among the various perſons ambitious of appending their names to that of my illuſtrious friend. That ſketch is, however, an entertaining little collection of fragments. Thoſe which he publiſhed of Pope and Addiſon are of higher merit; but his fame muſt chiefly reſt upon his "Political Conferences," in which he introduces ſeveral eminent perſons delivering their ſentiments in the way of dialogue, and diſcovers a conſiderable ſhare of learning, various knowledge, and diſcernment of character. This much may I be allowed to ſay of a man who was exceedingly obliging to me, and who lived with Dr. Johnſon in as eaſy a manner as almoſt any of his very numerous acquaintance.

Mr. Edwards had ſaid to me aſide, that Dr. Johnſon ſhould have been of a profeſſion. I repeated the remark to Johnſon that I might have his own thoughts on the ſubject. JOHNSON. "Sir, it *would* have been better that I had been of a profeſſion. I ought to have been a lawyer." BOSWELL. "I do not think, Sir, it would have been better, for we ſhould not have had the Engliſh Dictionary." JOHNSON. "But you would have had Reports." BOSWELL. "Aye; but there would not have been another who could have written the Dictionary. There have been many very good Judges. Suppoſe you had been

been Lord Chancellor; you would have delivered opinions with more extent of mind, and in a more ornamented manner, than perhaps any Chancellor ever did, or ever will do. But, I believe, cauſes have been as judiciouſly decided as you could have done." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir. Property has been as well ſettled." 1778. Ætat. 69.

Johnſon, however, had a noble ambition floating in his mind, and had, undoubtedly, often ſpeculated on the poſſibility of his ſupereminent powers being rewarded in this great and liberal country by the higheſt honours of the ſtate. Sir William Scott informs me, that upon the death of the late Lord Litchfield, who was Chancellor of the Univerſity of Oxford, he ſaid to Johnſon, "What a pity it is, Sir, that you did not follow the profeſſion of the law. You might have been Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, and attained to the dignity of the peerage; and now that the title of Litchfield, your native city is extinct, you might have had it." Johnſon upon this, ſeemed much agitated; and, in an angry tone, exclaimed, "Why will you vex me by ſuggeſting this, when it is too late?"

But he did not repine at the proſperity of others. The late Dr. Thomas Leland told Mr. Courtenay, that when Mr. Edmund Burke ſhewed Johnſon his fine houſe and lands near Beaconsfield, Johnſon coolly ſaid, "*Non equidem invideo; miror magis.*"

Yet no man had a higher notion of the dignity of literature than Johnſon, or was more determined in maintaining the reſpect which he juſtly conſidered as due to it. Of this, beſides the general tenor of his conduct in ſociety, ſome characteriſtical inſtances may be mentioned.

He told Sir Joſhua Reynolds, that once when he dined in a numerous company of bookſellers, where

1778. Ætat. 69. where the room being ſmall, the head of the table, at which he ſat, was almoſt cloſe to the fire, he perſevered in ſuffering a great deal of inconvenience from the heat, rather than quit his place, and let one of them ſit above him.

Goldſmith, in his diverting ſimplicity, complained one day, in a mixed company, of Lord Camden. "I met him (ſaid he) at Lord Clare's houſe in the country, and he took no more notice of me than if I had been an ordinary man." The company having laughed heartily, Johnſon ſtood forth in defence of his friend. "Nay, gentlemen, (ſaid he) Dr. Goldſmith is in the right. A nobleman ought to have made up to ſuch a man as Goldſmith; and I think it is much againſt Lord Camden that he neglected him."

Nor could he patiently endure to hear that ſuch reſpect as he thought due only to higher intellectual qualities, ſhould be beſtowed on men of ſlighter, though perhaps more amuſing talents. I told him, that one morning, when I went to breakfaſt with Garrick, who was very vain of his intimacy with Lord Camden, he accoſted me thus:—"Pray now, did you?—did you meet a little lawyer turning the corner, eh?" "No, Sir, (ſaid I). Pray what do you mean by the queſtion?"—"Why, (replied Garrick, with an affected indifference, yet as if ſtanding on tip-toe,) Lord Camden has this moment left me. We have had a long walk together." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir, Garrick talked very properly. Lord Camden *was* a little lawyer to be aſſociating ſo familiarly with a player."

Sir Joſhua Reynolds has obſerved, with great truth, that Johnſon conſidered Garrick to be as it were his *property*. He would allow no man either

either to blame or to praiſe Garrick in his preſence, without contradicting him. 1778. Ætat. 69.

Having fallen into a very ſerious frame, in which mutual expreſſions of kindneſs paſſed between us, ſuch as would be thought too vain in me to repeat, I talked with regret of the ſad inevitable certainty that one of us muſt ſurvive the other. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, that is an affecting conſideration. I remember Swift, in one of his letters to Pope, ſays, 'I intend to come over, that we may meet once more; and when we muſt part, it is what happens to all human beings." BOSWELL. "The hope that we ſhall ſee our departed friends again muſt ſupport the mind." JOHNSON. "Why yes, Sir." BOSWELL. "There is a ſtrange unwillingneſs to part with life, independent of ſerious fears as to futurity. A reverend friend of ours (naming him) tells me, that he feels an uneaſineſs at the thoughts of leaving his houſe, his ſtudy, his books." JOHNSON. "This is fooliſh in * * *. A man need not be uneaſy on theſe grounds; for as he will retain his conſciouſneſs, he may ſay with the philoſopher, *omnia mea mecum porto.*" BOSWELL. "True, Sir: we may carry our books in our head; but ſtill there is ſomething painful in the thought of leaving for ever what has given us pleaſure. I remember many years ago, when my imagination was warm, and I happened to be in a melancholy mood, it diſtreſſed me to think of going into a ſtate of being in which Shakeſpeare's poetry did not exiſt. A lady whom I then much admired, a very amiable woman, humoured my fancy, and relieved me by ſaying, 'The firſt thing you will meet with in the other world, will be an elegant copy of Shakeſpeare's works preſented to you."

Dr.

1778. Dr. Johnſon ſmiled benignantly at this, and did not appear to diſapprove of the notion.

Ætat. 69. We went to St. Clement's church again in the afternoon, and then returned and drank tea and coffee in Mrs. Williams's room; Mrs. Deſmoulins doing the honours of the tea table. I obſerved that he would not even look at a proof-ſheet of his "Life of Waller" on Good Friday.

Mr. Allen, the printer, brought a book on agriculture, which was printed, and was ſoon to be publiſhed. It was a very ſtrange performance, the author having mixed in it his own thoughts upon various topics, along with his remarks on ploughing, ſowing, and other farming operations. He ſeemed to be an abſurd profane fellow, and had introduced in his book many ſneers at religion, with equal ignorance and conceit. Dr. Johnſon permitted me to read ſome paſſages aloud. One was, that he reſolved to work on Sunday, and did work, but he owned he felt *ſome* weak compunction; and he had this very curious reflection:—"I was born in the wilds of Chriſtianity, and the briars and thorns ſtill hang about me." Dr. Johnſon could not help laughing at this ridiculous image, yet was very angry at the fellow's impiety. "However (ſaid he,) the Reviewers will make him hang himſelf." He however obſerved, "that formerly there might have been a diſpenſation obtained for working on Sunday in the time of harveſt." Indeed in ritual obſervances, were all the miniſters of religion what they ſhould be, and what many of them are, ſuch a power might be wiſely and ſafely lodged with the Church.

On Saturday, April 14, I drank tea with him. He praiſed the late Mr. Duncombe, of Canterbury, as a pleaſing man. "He uſed to come to me: I did not ſeek much after *him*. Indeed

deed I never ſought much after any body. 1778.
BOSWELL. "Lord Orrery, I ſuppoſe." JOHNSON. "No, Sir, I never went to him but when he ſent for me." BOSWELL. "Richardſon?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir. But I ſought after George Pſalmanazar the moſt. I uſed to go and ſit with him at an alehouſe in the city." Ætat. 69.

I am happy to mention another inſtance which I diſcovered of his *ſeeking after* a man of merit. Soon after the Honourable Daines Barrington had publiſhed his excellent "Obſervations on the Statutes," Johnſon waited on that worthy and learned gentleman; and having told him his name, courteouſly ſaid, "I have read your book, Sir, with great pleaſure, and wiſh to be better known to you." Thus began an acquaintance, which was continued with mutual regard as long as Johnſon lived.

Talking of a recent ſeditious delinquent, he ſaid, "They ſhould ſet him in the pillory, that he may be puniſhed in a way that would diſgrace him." I obſerved, that the pillory does not always diſgrace. And I mentioned an inſtance of a gentleman who I thought was not diſhonoured by it. JOHNSON. "Aye, but he was, Sir. He could not mouth and ſtrut as he uſed to do, after having been there. People are not very willing to aſk a man to their tables who has ſtood in the pillory."

The gentleman who had dined with us at Dr. Percy's came in. Johnſon attacked the Americans with intemperate vehemence of abuſe. I ſaid ſomething in their favour; and added, that I was always ſorry when he talked on that ſubject. This, it ſeems, exaſperated him; though he ſaid nothing at the time. The cloud

was

1778. was charged with ſulphureous vapour, which was afterwards to burſt in thunder.—We talked Ætat. 69. of a gentleman who was running out his fortune in London: and I ſaid "We muſt get him out of it. All his friends muſt quarrel with him, and that will ſoon drive him away." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, we'll ſend *you* to him. If your company does not drive a man out of his houſe nothing will." This was a horrible ſhock, for which there was no viſible cauſe. I afterwards aſked him why he had ſaid ſo harſh a thing. JOHNSON. "Becauſe, Sir, you had made me angry about the Americans." BOSWELL. "But why did not you take your revenge directly?" JOHNSON. (ſmiling) "Becauſe, Sir, I had nothing ready. A man cannot ſtrike till he has his weapons." This was a candid and pleaſant confeſſion.

He ſhewed me to-night his drawing-room, very genteelly fitted up; and ſaid, "Mrs. Thrale ſneered when I talked of my having aſked you and your lady to live at my houſe. I was obliged to tell her, that you would be in as reſpectable a ſituation in my houſe as at hers. Sir, the inſolence of wealth will creep out." BOSWELL. "She has a little both of the inſolence of wealth, and the conceit of parts." JOHNSON. "The inſolence of wealth is a wretched thing; but the conceit of parts has ſome foundation. To be ſure it ſhould not be. But who is without it? BOSWELL. "Yourſelf, Sir." JOHNSON. "Why I play Sir. You are ſix feet high, and you only do not ſtoop."

We talked of the numbers of people that ſometimes have compoſed the houſhold of great families. I mentioned that there were a hundred in the family of the preſent Earl of Eglintoune's

toune's father. Dr. Johnſon ſeeming to doubt it, I began to enumerate. "Let us ſee, my lord and my lady two." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, if you are to count by twos, you may be long enough." BOSWELL. "Well, but now I add two ſons and ſeven daughters, and a ſervant for each, that will make twenty; ſo we have the fifth part already." JOHNSON. "Very true. You get at twenty pretty readily; but you will not ſo eaſily get further on. We grow to five feet pretty readily; but it is not ſo eaſy to ſeven." 1778. Ætat. 69.

On Sunday, April 19, being Eaſter-day, after the ſolemnities of the feſtival in St. Paul's church I viſited him, but could not ſtay to dinner. I expreſſed a wiſh to have the arguments for Chriſtianity always in readineſs, that my religious faith might be as firm and clear as any propoſition whatever, ſo that I need not be under the leaſt uneaſineſs when it ſhould be attacked. JOHNSON. "Sir, you cannot anſwer all objections. You have demonſtration for a firſt cauſe: you ſee he muſt be good as well as powerful, becauſe there is nothing to make him otherwiſe, and goodneſs of itſelf is preferable. Yet you have againſt this, what is very certain, the unhappineſs of human life. This, however, gives us reaſon to hope for a future ſtate of compenſation, that there may be a perfect ſyſtem. But of that we were not ſure till we had a poſitive revelation." I told him, that his "Raſſelas" had often made me unhappy; for it repreſented the miſery of human life ſo well, and ſo convincing to a thinking mind, that if at any time the impreſſion wore off, and I felt myſelf eaſy, I began to ſuſpect ſome deluſion.

On Monday, April 20, I found him at home in the morning. We talked of a gentleman who

1778. Ætat. 69. who we apprehended was gradually involving his circumſtances by bad management. JOHNSON. "Waſting a fortune is evaporation by a thouſand imperceptible means. If it were a ſtream, they'd ſtop it. You muſt ſpeak to him. It is really miſerable. Were he a gameſter, it could be ſaid he had hopes of winning. Were he a bankrupt in trade, he might have grown rich; but as he has neither ſpirit to ſpend, nor reſolution to ſpare. He does not ſpend faſt enough to have pleaſure from it. He has the crime of prodigality, and the wretchedneſs of parſimony. If a man is killed in a duel, he is killed as many a one has been killed; but it is a ſad thing for a man to lie down and die; to bleed to death, becauſe he has not fortitude enough to fear the wound, or even to ſtitch it up." I cannot but pauſe a moment to admire the fecundity of fancy, and choice of language, which in this inſtance, and indeed upon almoſt all occaſions, he diſplayed. It was well obſerved by Dr. Percy, now biſhop of Dromore, "The converſation of Johnſon is ſtrong and clear, and may be compared to an antique ſtatue, where every vein and muſcle is diſtinct and bold. Ordinary converſation reſembles an inferiour caſt."

On Saturday, April 25, I dined with him at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, with the learned Dr. Muſgrave, Counſellor Leland of Ireland, ſon to the hiſtorian, Mrs. Cholmondely, and ſome more ladies. "The Project," a new poem, was read to the company by Dr. Muſgrave. JOHNSON. "Sir, it has no power. Were it not for the well-known names with which it is filled, it would be nothing: the names carry the poet, not the poet the names." MUSGRAVE. "A temporary poem always entertains us." JOHNSON.

JOHNSON. "So does an account of the criminals hanged yesterday entertain us." 1778. Ætat. 69.

He proceeded:—"Demosthenes Taylor, as he was called, (that is, the translator of Demosthenes,) was the most silent man, the merest statue of a man that I have ever seen. I once dined in company with him; and all he said during the whole time was no more than *Richard*. How a man should say only Richard, it is not easy to imagine. But it was thus: Dr. Douglas was talking of Dr. Zachary Grey, and ascribing to him something that was written by Dr. Richard Grey. So to correct him, Taylor said, (imitating his affected sententious emphasis and nod,) '*Richard*."

Mrs. Cholmondely, in a high flow of spirits, exhibited some lively sallies of hyperbolical compliment to Johnson, with whom she had been long acquainted, and was very easy. He was quick in catching the *manner* of the moment, and answered her somewhat in the style of the hero of a romance, "Madam, you crown me with unfading laurels."

I happened, I know not how, to say that a pamphlet meant a prose piece. JOHNSON. "No, Sir, A few sheets of poetry unbound are a pamphlet, as much as a few sheets of prose." MUSGRAVE. "A pamphlet may be understood to mean a poetical piece, in Westminster-hall, that is in formal language; but in common language it is understood to mean prose." JOHNSON. (and here was one of the many instances of his knowing clearly and telling exactly how a thing is) "A pamphlet is understood in common language to mean prose, only from this, that there is so much more prose written than poetry; as when we say a *book*, prose is understood for the same reason, though a book may

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1778. Ætat. 69. as well be in poetry as in proſe. We underſtand what is moſt general, and we name what is leſs frequent."

We talked of a certain lady's verſes on Ireland. MISS REYNOLDS. "Have you ſeen them, Sir?" JOHNSON. "No, madam. I have ſeen a tranſlation from Horace, by one of her daughters. She ſhewed it me." MISS REYNOLDS. "And how was it Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why very well, for a young Miſs's verſes; that is to ſay, compared with excellence, nothing; but very well, for the perſon who wrote them. I am vexed at being ſhewn verſes in that manner." MISS REYNOLDS. "But if they ſhould be good, why not give them hearty praiſe?" JOHNSON. "Why, Madam, becauſe I have not then got the better of my bad humour from having been ſhewn them. You muſt conſider, Madam; before hand they may be bad as well as good. Nobody has a right to put another under ſuch a difficulty, that he muſt either hurt the perſon by telling the truth, or hurt himſelf by telling what is not true." BOSWELL. "A man often ſhews his writings to people of eminence, to obtain from them, either from their good-nature, or from their not being able to tell the truth firmly, a commendation, of which he may afterwards avail himſelf." JOHNSON. "Very true, Sir. Therefore, a man who is aſked by an authour what he thinks of his work, is put to the torture, and is not obliged to ſpeak the truth; ſo that what he ſays is not to be conſidered as his opinion; yet he has ſaid it, and cannot retract it; and this authour, when mankind are hunting him with a canniſter at his tail, can ſay, 'I would not have publiſhed, had not Johnſon, or Reynolds, or Muſgrave, or ſome other good judge commend-

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ed the work." Yet I conſider it as a very difficult queſtion in conſcience, whether one ſhould adviſe a man not to publiſh a work, if profit be his object; for the man can ſay, 'Had it not been for you, I ſhould have had the money.' Now you cannot be ſure; for you have only your own opinion, and the public may think very differently." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "You muſt upon ſuch an occaſion have two judgments; one as to the real value of the work, the other as to what may pleaſe the general taſte at the time." JOHNSON. "But you can be *ſure* of neither; and therefore I ſhould ſcruple much to give a ſuppreſſive vote. Both Goldſmith's comedies were once refuſed; his firſt by Garrick, his ſecond by Colman, who was prevailed on at laſt by much ſolicitation, nay, a kind of force, to bring it on. His 'Vicar of Wakefield', I myſelf did not think would have had much ſucceſs. It was written and ſold to a bookſeller before his 'Traveller,' but publiſhed after; ſo little expectation had the bookſeller from it. Had it been ſold after 'The Traveller,' he might have had twice as much money for it, though ſixty guineas was no mean price. The bookſeller had the advantage of Goldſmith's reputation from 'The Traveller,' in the ſale, though he had it not in ſelling the copy." Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "The Beggar's Opera affords a proof how ſtrangely people will differ in opinion about a literary performance. Burke thinks it has no merit." JOHNSON. "It was refuſed by one of the houſes; but I ſhould have thought it would ſucceed, not from any great excellence in the writing, but from the novelty, and the general ſpirit and gaiety of the piece, which keeps the

1778. Ætat. 69.

1778. audience always attentive, and diſmiſſes them in good humour."
Ætat. 69.

We went to the drawing-room, where was a conſiderable increaſe of company. Several of us got round Dr. Johnſon, and complained that he would not give us an exact catalogue of his works, that there might be a complete edition. He ſmiled, and evaded our intreaties. That he intended to do it I have no doubt, becauſe I have heard him ſay ſo; and I have in my poſſeſſion an imperfect liſt, fairly written out, which he entitles *Hiſtoria Studiorum*. I once got from one of his friends a liſt, which there was pretty good reaſon to ſuppoſe was accurate, for it was written down in his preſence by this friend, who enumerated each article aloud, and had ſome of them mentioned to him by Mr. Levett, in concert with whom it was made out; and Johnſon, who heard all this, did not contradict it. But when I ſhewed a copy of this liſt to him, and mentioned the evidence for its exactneſs, he laughed and ſaid, "I was willing to let them go on as they pleaſed, and never interfered." Upon which I read it to him, article by article, and got him poſitively to own or refuſe; and then having obtained certainty ſo far, I got ſome other articles confirmed by him directly, and afterwards, from time to time, made additions under his ſanction.

His friend Edward Cave having been mentioned, he told us, "Cave uſed to ſell ten thouſand of 'The Gentleman's Magazine;' yet ſuch was then his minute attention and anxiety that the ſale ſhould not feel the ſmalleſt diminution, that he would name a particular perſon who he heard had talked of leaving off the magazine, and would ſay, 'Let us have ſomething good next month."

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It was obſerved, that avarice was inherent in ſome diſpoſitions. JOHNSON. "No man was born a miſer, becauſe no man was born to poſſeſſion. Every man is born *cupidus*—deſirous of getting; but not *avarus*—deſirous of keeping." BOSWELL. "I have heard old Mr. Sheridan maintain, with much ingenuity, that a complete miſer is a happy man; a miſer who gives himſelf wholly to the one paſſion of ſaving." JOHNSON. "That is flying in the face of all the world, who have called an avaricious man a *miſer*, becauſe he is miſerable. No, Sir; a man who both ſpends and ſaves money is the happieſt man, becauſe he has both enjoyments." 1778. Ætat. 69.

The converſation having turned on *bon mots*, he quoted from one of the *Ana* an exquiſite inſtance of flattery in a maid of honour in France, who being aſked by the Queen what o'clock it was, anſwered, "What your Majeſty pleaſes." He admitted that Mr. Burke's claſſical pun upon Mr. Wilkes's being carried on the ſhoulders of the mob,

"—— *numeriſque fertur*
"*Lege ſolutus*,"——

was admirable; and though he was ſtrangely unwilling to allow to that extraordinary man the talent of wit*, he alſo laughed with approba-

† See this queſtion fully inveſtigated in the Notes upon my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," edit. 3, p. 21, *et ſeq.* And here, as a lawyer mindful of the maxim *Jurem cuique tribuito*, I cannot forbear to mention, that the additional note beginning with "I find ſince the former edition," is not mine, but was obligingly furniſhed by Mr. Malone, who was ſo kind as to ſuperintend the preſs while I was in Scotland, and the firſt part of the ſecond edition was printing. He would not allow me to aſcribe it to its proper authour; but as it is exquiſitely acute and elegant, I take this opportunity, without his knowledge, to do him juſtice.

1778. Ætat. 69. tion at another of his playful conceits; which was, that "Horace has in one line given a deſcription of a good deſirable manour:

'*Eſt modus in rebus, ſunt certi denique fines.*'

that is to ſay, a *modus* as to the tithes and certain *fines*."

He obſerved, "A man cannot with propriety ſpeak of himſelf, except he relates ſimple facts; as, 'I was at Richmond:' or what depends on menſuration; as, 'I am ſix feet high.' He is ſure he has been at Richmond; he is ſure he is ſix feet high: but he cannot be ſure he is wiſe, or that he has any other excellence. Then, all cenſure of a man's ſelf is oblique praiſe. It is in order to ſhew how much he can ſpare. It has all the invidiouſneſs of ſelf-praiſe, and all the reproach of falſehood." BOSWELL. "Sometimes it may proceed from a man's ſtrong conſciouſneſs of his faults being obſerved. He knows that others would throw him down, and therefore he had better lye down ſoftly of his own accord."

On Tueſday, April 28, he was engaged to dine at General Paoli's, where, as I have already obſerved, I was ſtill entertained in elegant hoſpitality, and with all the eaſe and comfort of a home. I called on him, and accompanied him in a hackney-coach. We ſtopped firſt at the bottom of Hedge-lane, into which he went to leave a letter, "with good news for a poor man in diſtreſs," as he told me. I did not queſtion him particularly as to this. He himſelf often reſembled Lady Bolingbroke's lively deſcription of Pope: that "he was *un politique aux choux et aux raves*." He would ſay, "I dine to day in Groſvenor-ſquare;" this might be

be with a Duke: or perhaps, "I dine to day at the other end of the town:" or, "A gentleman of great eminence called on me yeſterday." He loved thus to keep things floating in conjecture: *Omne ignotum pro magnifico eſt.* I believe I ventured to diſſipate the cloud, to unveil the myſtery, more freely and frequently than any of his friends. We ſtopped again at Wirgman's, the corner of St. James's-ſtreet, a *toy-ſhop*, to which he had been directed, but not clearly, for he ſearched about ſome time, and could not find it at firſt; and ſaid, "To direct one only to a corner ſhop is *toying* with one." I ſuppoſe he meant this as a play upon the word *toy:* it was the firſt time that I knew him ſtoop to ſuch ſport. After he had been ſome time in the ſhop, he ſent for me to come out of the coach, and help him to chooſe a pair of ſilver-buckles, as thoſe he had were too ſmall. Probably this alteration in dreſs had been ſuggeſted by Mrs. Thrale, by aſſociating with whom, his external appearance was much improved. He got better clothes; and the dark colour, from which he never deviated, was enlivened by metal buttons. His wigs too, were much better; and during their travels in France, he was furniſhed with a Paris-made wig, of handſome conſtruction. This chooſing of ſilver buckles was a negociation: "Sir, (ſaid he) I will not have the ridiculous large ones now in faſhion; and I will give no more than a guinea for a pair." Such were the *principles* of the buſineſs; and, after ſome examination, he was fitted. As we drove along, I found him in a talking humour, of which I availed myſelf. BOSWELL. "I was this morning in Ridley's ſhop, Sir; and was told, that the collection called '*Johnſoniana*' has ſold very much." JOHNSON. "Yet the

1778. Ætat. 69.

1778. Ætat. 69. the 'Journey to the Hebrides' has not had great ſale*." BOSWELL. "That is ſtrange."—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; for in that book I have told the world a great deal that they did not know before."

BOSWELL. "I drank chocolate, Sir, this forenoon with Mr. Eld; and to my no ſmall ſurprize, found him to be a *Staffordſhire Whig*, a being which I did not believe had exiſted."—JOHNSON. "Sir, there are raſcals in all countries." BOSWELL. "Eld ſaid, a Tory was a creature generated between a non-juring parſon and one's grand-mother." JOHNSON. "And I have always ſaid, the firſt Whig was the Devil." BOSWELL. "He certainly was, Sir. The Devil was impatient of ſubordination; he was the firſt who reſiſted power:

'Better to reign in Hell than ſerve in Heaven."

At General Paoli's were Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Mr. Langton, Marcheſe Gherardi of Lombardy, and Mr. John Spottiſwoode, of Spottiſwoode†, the ſolicitor. At this time fears of an invaſion were circulated; to obviate which, Mr. Spottiſwoode obſerved, that Mr. Fraſer the engineer, who had lately come from Dunkirk, ſaid,

* Here he either was miſtaken, or had a different notion of an extenſive ſale from what is generally entertained:—for the fact is, that four thouſand copies of that excellent work were ſold very quickly. A new edition has been printed ſince his death, beſides that in the collection of his works.

† In the phraſeology of Scotland, I ſhould have ſaid, "Mr. Spottiſwoode *of that ilk*." Johnſon knew that ſenſe of the word very well, and has thus explained it in his Dictionary, *voce* ILK—"It alſo ſignifies 'the ſame;' as, *Mackintoſh of that Ilk*, denotes a gentleman whoſe ſurname and the title of his eſtate are the ſame."

that

that the French had the ſame fears of us.— JOHNSON. "It is thus that mutual cowardice keeps us in peace. Were one half of mankind brave, and one half cowards, the brave would be always beating the cowards. Were all brave, they would lead a very uneaſy life; all would be continually fighting: but being all cowards, we go on very well." 1778. Ætat. 69.

We talked of drinking wine. JOHNSON.— "I require wine only when I am alone. I have then often wiſhed for it, and often taken it."— SPOTTISWOODE. "What, by way of a companion, Sir?" JOHNSON. "To get rid of myſelf, to ſend myſelf away. Wine gives great pleaſure; and every pleaſure is of itſelf a good. It is a good, unleſs counterbalanced by evil. A man may have a ſtrong reaſon not to drink wine; and that may be greater than the pleaſure. Wine makes a man better pleaſed with himſelf. I do not ſay that it makes him more pleaſing to others. Sometimes it does. But the danger is, that while a man grows better pleaſed with himſelf, he may be growing leſs pleaſing to others‡. Wine gives a man nothing. It neither gives him knowledge nor wit; it only animates a man, and enables him to bring out what a dread of the company has repreſſed. It only puts in motion what has been locked up in froſt. But this may be good, or it may be bad." SPOTTISWOODE. "So, Sir, wine is a key which opens a box: but this box may be either full or empty." —JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, converſation is the

‡ It is obſerved in Waller's Life, in the *Biographia Britannica*, that while he ſat in a company who were drinking wine, "he had the dexterity to accommodate his diſcourſe to the pitch of theirs as it *ſunk*." If exceſs in drinking be meant, the remark is acutely juſt. But ſurely, a moderate uſe of wine gives a gaiety of ſpirits which water-drinkers know not.

key:

1778. Ætat. 69. key: wine is a pick-lock which forces open the box and injures it. A man ſhould cultivate his mind ſo as to have that confidence and readineſs without wine, which wine gives." BOSWELL. "The great difficulty of reſiſting wine is from benevolence. For inſtance, a good worthy man aſks you to taſte his wine which he has had twenty years in his cellar." JOHNSON. "Sir, all this notion about benevolence ariſes from a man's imagining himſelf to be of more importance to others, than he really is. They don't care a farthing whether he drinks wine or not." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "Yes, they do for the time" JOHNSON. "For the time!—If they care this minute, they forget it the next.—And as for the good worthy man; how do we know he is good and worthy? No good and worthy man will inſiſt upon another man's drinking wine. As to the wine twenty years in the cellar—of ten men, three ſay this, merely becauſe they muſt ſay ſomething; three are telling a lie, when they ſay they have had the wine twenty years;—three would rather ſave the wine;—one, perhaps, cares. I allow it is ſomething to pleaſe one's company; and people are always pleaſed with thoſe who partake pleaſure with them. But after a man has brought himſelf to relinquiſh the great perſonal pleaſure which ariſes from drinking wine, any other conſideration is a trifle. To pleaſe others by drinking wine, is ſomething, only if there be nothing againſt it. I ſhould, however, be ſorry to offend worthy men:

'Curſt be the verſe, how well ſoe'er it flow,
'That tends to make one worthy man my foe."

BOSWELL. "Curſt be the *ſpring*, the *water*." JOHNSON. "But let us conſider what a ſad thing

thing it would be, if we were obliged to drink or do any thing elſe that may happen to be agreeable to the company where we are."— LANGTON. "By the ſame rule you muſt join with a gang of cut-purſes." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir: but yet we muſt do juſtice to wine; we muſt allow it the power it poſſeſſes. To make a man pleaſed with himſelf, let me tell you, is doing a very great thing; 1778. Ætat. 69.

'*Si patriæ volumus, ſi* Nobis *vivere cari.*"

I was at this time myſelf a water-drinker upon trial by Johnſon's recommendation. JOHNSON. "Boſwell is a bolder combatant than Sir Joſhua: he argues for wine without the help of wine; but Sir Joſhua with it." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "But to pleaſe one's company is a ſtrong motive." JOHNSON. (who, from drinking only water, ſuppoſed every body who drank wine to be elevated,) "I won't argue any more with you, Sir. You are too far gone." SIR JOSHUA. "I ſhould have thought ſo indeed, Sir, had I made ſuch a ſpeech as you have now done." JOHNSON. (drawing himſelf in, and, I really thought, bluſhing,) "Nay, don't be angry. I did not mean to offend you." SIR JOSHUA. "At firſt the taſte of wine was diſagreeable to me; but I brought myſelf to drink it, that I might be like other people. The pleaſure of drinking wine is ſo connected with pleaſing your company, that altogether there is ſomething of ſocial goodneſs in it." JOHNSON. "Sir, this is only ſaying the ſame thing over again."— SIR JOSHUA. "No, this is new." JOHNSON. "You put it in new words, but it is an old thought. This is one of the diſadvantages of wine. It makes a man miſtake words for thoughts."

1778. Ætat. 69. thoughts." BOSWELL. "I think it is a new thought; at leaſt, it is a new *attitude*." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, it is only in a new coat; or an old coat with a new facing. (Then laughing heartily) It is the old dog in a new doublet. An extraordinary inſtance however may occur where a man's patron will do nothing for him, unleſs he will drink: *there* may be a good reaſon for drinking."

I mentioned a nobleman who I believed was really uneaſy if his company would not drink hard. JOHNSON. "That is from having had people about him whom he had been accuſtomed to command." BOSWELL. "Suppoſing I ſhould be *tête à tête* with him at table. JOHNSON.—"Sir, there is no more reaſon for your drinking with *him*, than his being ſober with *you*. BOSWELL. "Why that is true; for it would do him leſs hurt to be ſober, than it would do me to get drunk." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, and from what I have heard of him, one would not wiſh to ſacrifice himſelf to ſuch a man. If he muſt always have ſomebody to drink with him, he ſhould buy a ſlave, and then he would be ſure to have it. They who ſubmit to drink as another pleaſes, make themſelves his ſlaves." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, you will ſurely make allowance for the duty of hoſpitality. A gentleman who loves drinking comes to viſit me." JOHNSON. "Sir, a man knows whom he viſits; he comes to the table of a ſober man." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, you and I ſhould not have been ſo well received in the Highlands and Hebrides, if I had not drank with our worthy friends. Had I drunk water only as you did, they would not have been ſo cordial." JOHNSON. "Sir William Temple mentions that in his travels through the Netherlands he had two or three gentlemen with

with him, and when a bumper was neceſſary he put it on *them*. Were I to travel again through the Highlands, I would have Sir Joſhua with me to take the bumpers." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, let me put a caſe. Suppoſe Sir Joſhua ſhould take a jaunt into Scotland; he does me the honour to pay me a viſit at my houſe in the country; I am overjoyed ſeeing him; we are quite by ourſelves; ſhall I unſociably and churliſhly let him ſit drinking by himſelf? No, no, my dear Sir Joſhua, you ſhall not be treated ſo, I *will* take a bottle with you." 1778. Ætat. 69.

The celebrated Mrs. Rudd being mentioned, JOHNSON. "Fifteen years ago I ſhould have gone to ſee her." SPOTTISWOODE. "Becauſe ſhe was fifteen years younger?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir; but now they have a trick of putting every thing into the news-papers."

He begged of General Paoli to repeat one of the introductory ſtanzas of the firſt book of Taſſo's "Jeruſalem," which he did, and then Johnſon found fault with the ſimile of ſweetening the edges of a cup for a child, being transferred from Lucretius into an epick poem. The general ſaid he did not imagine Homer's poetry was ſo ancient as is ſuppoſed, becauſe he aſcribes to a Greek colony circumſtances of refinement not found in Greece itſelf at a later period, when Thucydides wrote. JOHNSON. "I recollect but one paſſage quoted by Thucydides from Homer, which is not to be found in our copies of Homer's works; I am for the antiquity of Homer, and think that a Grecian colony by being nearer Perſia might be more refined than the mother country."

On Wedneſday, April 29, I dined with him at Mr. Allan Ramſay's, where were Lord Binning, Dr. Robertſon the hiſtorian, Sir Joſhua Reynolds,

1778. Ætat. 69. Reynolds, and the Honourable Mrs. Boſcawen, widow of the Admiral, and mother of the preſent Viſcount Falmouth, of whom, if it be not preſumptuous in me to praiſe her, I would ſay, that her manners are the moſt agreeable, and her converſation the beſt of any lady with whom I ever had the happineſs to be acquainted. Before Johnſon came we talked a good deal of him; Ramſay ſaid he had always found him a very polite man, and that he treated him with very great reſpect, which he did very ſincerely. I ſaid I worſhipped him. ROBERTSON. "But ſome of you ſpoil him; you ſhould not worſhip him; you ſhould worſhip no man. BOSWELL. "I cannot help worſhipping him, he is ſo much ſuperior to other men." ROBERTSON. "In criticiſm, and in wit in converſation he is no doubt very excellent; but in other reſpects he is not above other men; he will believe any thing, and will ſtrenuouſly defend the moſt minute circumſtance connected with the church of England." BOSWELL. "Believe me, Doctor, you are much miſtaken as to this; for when you talk with him calmly in private, he is very liberal in his way of thinking." ROBERTSON.—"He and I have been always very gracious;—the firſt time I met him was one evening at Strahan's, when he had juſt had an unlucky altercation with Adam Smith, to whom he had been ſo rough, that Strahan, after Smith was gone, had remonſtrated with him, and told him that I was coming ſoon, and that he was uneaſy to think that he might behave in the ſame manner to me. 'No, no, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) I warrant you Robertſon and I ſhall do very well.' Accordingly he was gentle and good-humoured, and courteous with me the whole evening; and he has been ſo upon every occaſion that we have met

met ſince. I have often ſaid (laughing) that I have been in a great meaſure indebted to Smith for my good reception." BOSWELL. "His power of reaſoning is very ſtrong, and he has a peculiar art of drawing characters, which is as rare as good portrait painting." Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "He is undoubtedly admirable in this; but, in order to mark the characters which he draws, he overcharges them, and gives people more than they really have, whether of good or bad." 1778. Ætat. 69.

No ſooner did he, of whom we had been thus talking ſo eaſily, arrive, than we were all as quiet as a ſchool upon the entrance of the head maſter; and were very ſoon ſet down to ſuch good things as contributed not a little to diſpoſe him to be pleaſed.

RAMSAY. "I am old enough to have been a contemporary of Pope. His poetry was highly admired in his life-time, more a great deal than after his death. JOHNSON. "Sir, it has not been leſs admired after his death; no authours ever had ſo much fame in their own life-time as Pope and Voltaire; and Pope's poetry has been as much admired after his death as during his life; it has only not been as much talked of, but that is owing to its being now more diſtant, and people having other writings to talk of. Virgil is leſs talked of than Pope, and Homer is leſs talked of than Virgil; but they are not leſs admired. We muſt read what the world reads at the moment. It has been maintained that this ſuperfœtation, this teeming of the preſs in modern times, is prejudical to good literature, becauſe it obliges us to read ſo much of what is of inferior value, in order to be in the faſhion; ſo that better works are neglected for want of time, becauſe a man will have more gratification of his vanity in

1778. Ætat. 69. in converſation, from having read modern books, than from having read the beſt works of antiquity. But it muſt be conſidered, that we have now no more knowledge generally diffuſed; all our ladies read now, which is a great extenſion.—Modern writers are the moons of literature, they ſhine with reflected light, with light borrowed from the ancients. Greece appears to me to be the fountain of knowledge; Rome of elegance." RAMSAY. "I ſuppoſe Homer's Iliad to be a collection of pieces which had been written before his time. I ſhould like to ſee a tranſlation of it in poetical proſe like the book of Ruth or Job." ROBERTSON. "Would you Dr. Johnſon, who are maſter of the Engliſh language, but try your hand upon a part of it."—JOHNSON. "Sir, you could not read it without the pleaſure of verſe*."

We talked of antiquarian reſearches. JOHNSON. "All that is really *known* of the ancient ſtate of Britain is contained in a few pages. We *can* know no more than what the old writers have told us; yet what large books have we upon it, the whole of which excepting ſuch parts as are taken from thoſe old writers is all a dream, ſuch as Whitaker's 'Mancheſter.' I have heard Henry's 'Hiſtory of Britain' well ſpoken of, I am told it is carried on in ſeparate diviſions, as the civil, the military, the religious hiſtory; I wiſh much to have one branch well done, and that is the hiſtory of manners, of common life." ROBERTSON. "Henry ſhould have applied his attention to that alone, which is enough for any man; and he might have found

* This experiment which Madame Dacier made in vain, has ſince been tried in our own language, by the editor of "Oſſian," and we muſt either think very meanly of his abilities, or allow that Dr. Johnſon was in the right.

a great

a great deal ſcattered in various books, had he read ſolely with that view. Henry erred in not ſelling his firſt volume at a moderate price to the bookſellers, that they might have puſhed him on till he had got reputation. I ſold my 'Hiſtory of Scotland' at a moderate price, as a work by which the bookſellers might either gain or not; and Cadell has told me that Millar and he have got ſix thouſand pounds by it. I afterwards received a much higher price for my writings. An authour ſhould ſell his firſt work for what the bookſellers will give, till it ſhall appear whether he is an authour of merit, or, which is the ſame thing as to purchaſe-money, an authour who pleaſes the public."

1778. Ætat. 69.

Dr. Robertſon expatiated on the character of a certain nobleman; that he was one of the ſtrongeſt-minded men that ever lived; that he would ſit in company quite ſluggiſh, while there was nothing to call forth his intellectual vigour; but the moment that any important ſubject was ſtarted, for inſtance, how this country is to be defended againſt a French invaſion, he would rouſe himſelf, and ſhew his extraordinary talents with the moſt powerful ability and animation."

JOHNSON. "Yet this man cut his own throat. The true ſtrong and ſound mind is the mind that can embrace equally great things and ſmall.—Now I am told the king of Pruſſia will ſay to a ſervant, 'Bring me a bottle of ſuch a wine, which came in ſuch a year; it lies in ſuch a corner of the cellars.' I would have a man to be great in great things, and elegant in little things." He ſaid to me afterwards, when we were by ourſelves,—Robertſon was in a mighty romantic humour, he talked of one whom he did not know; but I *downed* him with the king of Pruſſia." "Yes, Sir, (ſaid I,) you threw a *bottle* at his head."

An

1778. Ætat. 69. An ingenious gentleman was mentioned, concerning whom both Robertſon and Ramſay agreed that he had a conſtant firmneſs of mind; for after a laborious day, and a multiplicity of cares and anxieties, he would ſit down with his ſiſters and be quite cheerful and good-humoured. Such a diſpoſition it was obſerved, was a happy gift of nature. JOHNSON. "I do not think ſo; a man has from nature a certain portion of mind; the uſe he makes of it depends upon his own free will. That a man has always the ſame firmneſs of mind I do not ſay; becauſe every man feels his mind leſs firm at one time than at another; but I think a man's being in a good or bad humour depends upon his will." I, however, could not help thinking that a man's humour is often uncontroulable by his will.

Johnſon harangued againſt drinking wine, "A man (ſaid he) may chooſe whether he will have abſtemiouſneſs and knowledge, or claret and ignorance." Dr. Robertſon (who is very companionable) was beginning to diſſent as to the proſcription of claret. JOHNSON. (with a placid ſmile) "Nay, Sir, you ſhall not differ with me; as I have ſaid that the man is moſt perfect who takes in the moſt things, I am for knowledge and claret." ROBERTSON. (holding a glaſs of generous claret in his hand) "Sir, I can only drink your health." JOHNSON. "Sir, I ſhould be ſorry if *you* ſhould be ever in ſuch a ſtate as to be able to do nothing more. ROBERTSON.—"Dr. Johnſon, allow me to ſay, that in one reſpect I have the advantage of you; when you were in Scotland you would not come to hear any of our preachers, whereas when I am here, I attend your public worſhip without ſcruple, and indeed with great ſatisfaction." JOHNSON.—"Why, Sir, that is not ſo extraordinary: the King

King of Siam ſent ambaſſadors to Louis the Fourteenth; but Louis the Fourteenth ſent none to the King of Siam*." 1778. Ætat. 69.

Here my friend for once diſcovered a want of knowledge or forgetfulneſs; for Louis the Fourteenth did ſend an embaſſy to the King of Siam, and the Abbe Choiſis, who was employed in it, publiſhed an account of it in two volumes.

Next day, Thurſday, April 30, I found him at home by himſelf. JOHNSON. "Well, Sir, Ramſay gave us a ſplendid dinner. I love Ramſay. You will not find a man in whoſe converſation there is more inſtruction, more information, and more elegance, than in Ramſay's." BOSWELL. "What I admire in Ramſay, is his continuing to be ſo young." JOHNSON. "Why yes, Sir, it is to be admired. I value myſelf upon this, that there is nothing of the old man in my converſation. I am now ſixty-eight, and I have no more of it than at twenty-eight." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, would not you wiſh to know old age? He who is never an old man does not know the whole of human life; for old age is one of the diviſions of it." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, what talk is this? BOSWELL. "I mean, Sir, the Sphinx's deſcription of it—morning, noon, and night. I would know night, as well as morning and noon." JOHNSON. "What, Sir, would you know what it is to feel the evils of old age? Would you have the gout? Would you have decrepitude?"—Seeing him heated, I would not argue any farther; but I was confident that I was in the right. I would, in due time, be a Neſtor, an elder of the people; and there *ſhould* be ſome difference between the converſation of twenty-eight and ſixty-eight. A grave picture ſhould not be gay. There is a ſerene, ſolemn, placid old age. JOHNSON. "Mrs. Thrale's

* Mrs. Piozzi confidently mentions this as having paſſed in Scotland. "Anecdotes," p. 62.

1778. Ætat. 69. Thrale's mother ſaid of me what flattered me much. A clergyman was complaining of want of ſociety in the country where he lived; and ſaid, 'They talk of *runts*;' (that is young cows). 'Sir, (ſaid Mrs. Saluſbury,) Mr. Johnſon would learn to talk of runts:' meaning that I was a man who would make the moſt of my ſituation, whatever it was." He added, "I think myſelf a very polite man."

On Saturday, May 2, I dined with him at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, where there was a very large company, and a great deal of converſation; but owing to ſome circumſtance which I cannot now recollect, I have no record of any part of it, except that there were ſeveral people there by no means of the Johnſonian ſchool; ſo that leſs attention was paid to him than uſual, which put him out of humour; and upon ſome imaginary offence from me, he attacked me with ſuch rudeneſs, that I was vexed and angry, becauſe it gave thoſe perſons an opportunity of enlarging upon his ſuppoſed ferocity, and ill treatment of his beſt friends. I was ſo much hurt, and had my pride ſo much rouſed, that I kept away from him for a week; and, perhaps might have kept away much longer, nay, gone to Scotland without ſeeing him again, had not we fortunately met and been reconciled. To ſuch unhappy chances are human friendſhips liable.

On Friday, May 8, I dined with him at Mr. Langton's. I was reſerved and ſilent, which I ſuppoſe he perceived, and might recollect the cauſe. After dinner, when Mr. Langton was called out of the room, and we were by ourſelves, he drew his chair near to mine, and ſaid, in a tone of conciliating courteſy, "Well, how have you done?" Boswell, "Sir, you have made me very uneaſy by your behaviour to me when

when we were laſt at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's.— You know, my dear Sir, no man has a greater reſpect and affection for you, or would ſooner go to the end of the world to ſerve you.—Now to treat me ſo—." He inſiſted that I had interrupted him, which I aſſured him was not the caſe; and proceeded, "But why treat me ſo before people who neither love you nor me?" JOHNSON. "Well, I am ſorry for it, I'll make it up to you twenty different ways, as you pleaſe." BOSWELL. "I ſaid to-day to Sir Joſhua, when he obſerved that you *toſſed* me ſometimes, I don't care how often or how high he toſſes me, when only friends are preſent, for then I fall upon ſoft ground: but I do not like falling on ſtones, which is the caſe when enemies are preſent.—I think this a pretty good image, Sir." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is one of the happieſt I have ever heard." 1778. Ætat. 69.

The truth is, there was no venom in the wounds which he inflicted at any time, unleſs they were irritated by ſome malignant infuſion by other hands. We were inſtantly as cordial as ever, and joined in hearty laugh at ſome ludicrous but innocent peculiarities of one of our friends. BOSWELL. "Do you think, Sir, it is always culpable to laugh at a man to his face?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, that depends upon the man and the thing. If it is a ſlight man, and a ſlight thing, you may; for you take nothing valuable from him."

He ſaid, "I read yeſterday Dr. Blair's ſermon on Devotion, from the text 'Cornelius, *a devout man*.' His doctrine is the beſt limited, the beſt expreſſed: there is the moſt warmth without fanaticiſm, the moſt rational tranſport. There is one part of it which I diſapprove, and I'd have him correct it; which is, that 'he who

1778. Ætat. 69. does not feel joy in religion is far from the kingdom of heaven.' There are many good men whose fear of GOD predominates over their love. It may discourage. It was rashly said. A noble sermon it is indeed. I wish Blair would come over to the church of England."

When Mr. Langton returned to us, "flow of talk" went on. An eminent authour being mentioned;—JOHNSON. "He is not a pleasant man. His conversation is neither instructive nor brilliant. He does not talk as if impelled by any fullness of knowledge or vivacity of imagination. His conversation is like that of any other sensible man. He talks with no wish either to inform or to hear, but only becaufe he thinks it does not become —— ——— to sit in a company and say nothing."

Mr. Langton having repeated the anecdote of Addison having distinguished between his powers in conversation and in writing, by saying "I have only nine-pence in my pocket; but I can draw for a thousand pounds;"—JOHNSON. "He had not that retort ready, Sir; he had prepared it before-hand." LANGTON. (turning to me) "A fine surmise. Set a thief to catch a thief."

Johnson called the East-Indians barbarians. BOSWELL. "You will except the Chinese, Sir?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." BOSWELL. "Have they not arts?" JOHNSON. "They have pottery." BOSWELL. "What do you say to the written characters of their language?" JOHNSON. "Sir, they have an alphabet. They have not been able to form what all other nations have formed. BOSWELL. "There is more learning in their language than in any other, from the immense number of their characters." JOHNSON. "It is only more difficult from its rudeness; as there is more labour in hewing down a tree with a stone than with an axe."

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He ſaid, "I have been reading Lord Kames's 'Sketches of the Hiſtory of Man.' In treating of ſeverity of puniſhment, he mentions that of Madame Lapouchin, in Ruſſia, but he does not give it fairly; for I have looked at *Chappe D' Auteroche*, from whom he has taken it. He ſtops where it is ſaid that the ſpectators thought her innocent, and leaves out what follows; that ſhe nevertheleſs was guilty. Now this is being as culpable as one can conceive, to miſrepreſent fact in a book, and for what motive? It is like one of thoſe lies which people tell, one cannot ſee why. The woman's life was ſpared; and no puniſhment is too great for the favourite of an Empreſs who had conſpired to dethrone her miſtreſs." Boswell. "He was only giving a picture of the lady in her ſufferings." Johnson. "Nay, don't endeavour to palliate this. Guilt is a principal feature in the picture. Kames is puzzled with a queſtion that puzzled me when I was a very young man. Why is it that the intereſt of money is lower, when money is plentiful; for five pounds has the ſame proportion of value to a hundred pounds when money is plentiful, as when it is ſcarce? A lady explained it to me. 'It is (ſaid ſhe) becauſe when money is plentiful there are ſo many more who have money to lend, that they bid down one another. Many have then a hundred pounds; and one ſays, Take mine rather than another's, and you ſhall have it at four *per cent.*'" Boswell. "Does Lord Kames decide the queſtion?"—Johnson. "I think he leaves it as he found it." Boswell. "This muſt have been an extraordinary lady who inſtructed you, Sir. May I aſk who ſhe was?" Johnson. "Molly Aſton,

1778. Ætat. 69.

1778. Ætat. 69. Aſton*, Sir, the ſiſter of thoſe ladies with whom you dined at Litchfield.—I ſhall be at home to-morrow." Boswell. "Then let us dine by ourſelves at the Mitre, to keep up the old cuſtom, 'the cuſtom of the manor,' the cuſtom of the mitre." Johnson. "Sir, ſo it ſhall be."

On Saturday, May 9, we fulfilled our purpoſe of dining by ourſelves at the Mitre, according to old cuſtom. There was, on theſe occaſions, a little circumſtance of kind attention to Mrs. Williams, which muſt not be omitted. Before coming out, and leaving her to dine alone, he gave her choice of a chicken, a ſweetbread, or any other little nice thing, which was carefully ſent her from the tavern, ready dreſt.

Our converſation to-day, I know not how, turned, (I think for the only time at any length, during our long acquaintance) upon the ſenſual intercourſe between the ſexes, the delight of which he aſcribed chiefly to imagination.—"Were it not for imagination, Sir, (ſaid he), a man would be as happy in the arms of a chambermaid as of a Ducheſs. But ſuch is the adventitious charm of fancy, that we find men who have violated the beſt principles of ſociety, and ruined their fame and their fortune, that they might poſſeſs a woman of rank." It would not

* Johnſon had an extraordinary admiration of this lady, notwithſtanding ſhe was a violent Whig. In anſwer to her high-flown ſpeeches for *Liberty*, he addreſſed to her the following epigram, of which I preſume to offer a tranſlation:

"*Liber ut eſſe velim ſuaſiſti pulchra Maria,*
"*Ut maneam liber pulchra Maria vale.*"

Adieu, Maria! ſince you'd have me free;
For, who beholds thy charms a ſlave muſt be.

not be proper to record the particulars of such a converſation in moments of unreſerved frankneſs, when nobody was preſent on whom it could have any hurtful effect. That ſubject, when philoſophically treated, may ſurely employ the mind in as curious diſcuſſion, and as innocently as anatomy; provided that thoſe who do treat it keep clear of inflammatory incentives. 1778. Ætat. 69.

"From grave to gay, from lively to ſevere," we were ſoon engaged in very different ſpeculation; humbly and reverently conſidering and wondering at the univerſal myſtery of all things, as our imperfect faculties can now judge of them. "There are (ſaid he) innumerable queſtions to which the inquiſitive mind can in this ſtate receive no anſwer: Why do you and I exiſt? Why was this world created? Since it was to be created, why was it not created ſooner?"

On Sunday May 10, I ſupped with him at Mr. Hoole's, with Sir Joſhua Reynolds. I have neglected the memorial of this evening, ſo as to remember no more of it than two particulars; one, that he ſtrenuouſly oppoſed an argument by Sir Joſhua, that virtue was preferable to vice, conſidering this life only; and that a man would be virtuous were it only to preſerve his character: and, that he expreſſed much wonder at the curious formation of the bat, a mouſe with wings; ſaying, that "it was almoſt as ſtrange a thing in phyſiology, as if the fabulous dragon could be ſeen."

On Tueſday, May 12, I waited on the Earl of Marchmont, to know if his Lordſhip would favour Dr. Johnſon with information concerning Pope, whoſe life he was about to write. Johnſon had not flattered himſelf with the hopes of

1778. Ætat. 69. of receiving any civility from this nobleman; for he ſaid to me, when I mentioned Lord Marchmont as one who could tell him a great deal about Pope, "Sir, he will tell *me* nothing." I had the honour of being known to his Lordſhip, and applied to him of myſelf, without being commiſſioned by Johnſon. His Lordſhip behaved in the moſt polite and obliging manner, promiſed to tell all he recollected about Pope, and was ſo very courteous as to ſay, "Tell Dr. Johnſon I have a great reſpect for him, and am ready to ſhew it in any way I can. I am to be in the city to-morrow, and will call at his houſe as I return." His Lordſhip however aſked, "Will he write the Lives of the Poets impartially? He was the firſt that brought Whig and Tory into a Dictionary. And what do you think of his definition of Exciſe? Do you know the hiſtory of his averſion to the word *tranſpire?*" Then taking down the folio dictionary, he ſhewed it with this cenſure on its ſecondary ſenſe: "To eſcape from ſecrecy to notice; a ſenſe lately innovated from France, without neceſſity" The truth was, Lord Bolingbroke. who left the Jacobites, firſt uſed it; therefore it was to be condemned. He ſhould have ſhewn what word would do for it if it was unneceſſary." I afterwards put the queſtion to Johnſon: "Why, Sir, (ſaid he,) *get abroad.*" Boswell. "That, Sir, is uſing two words." Johnson. "Sir, there's no end of this. You may as well inſiſt to have a word for old age." Boswell. "Well Sir, *Senectus.*" Johnson. "Nay, Sir, to inſiſt always that there ſhould be one word to expreſs a thing in Engliſh, becauſe there is one in another language, is to change the language."

I avail-

I availed myſelf of this opportunity to hear from his Lordſhip many particulars both of Pope and Lord Bolingbroke, which I have in writing. 1778. Ætat. 69.

I propoſed to Lord Marchmont that he ſhould reviſe Johnſon's Life of Pope: "So (ſaid his lordſhip) you would put me in a dangerous ſituation. You know he knocked down Oſborne the bookſeller."

Elated with the ſucceſs of my ſpontaneous exertion to procure material and reſpectable aid to Johnſon for his very favourite work, "The Lives of the Poets." I haſtened down to Mr. Thrale's, at Streatham, where he now was, that I might inſure his being at home next day; ann after dinner, when I thought he would receive the good news in the beſt humour, I announced it eagerly: "I have been at work for you to day, Sir. I have been with Lord Marchmont. He bid me tell you he has a great reſpect for you, and will call on you to-morrow at one o'clock, and communicate all he knows about Pope."—Here I pauſed, in full expectation that he would be pleaſed with this intelligence, would praiſe my active merit, and would be alert to embrace ſuch an offer from a nobleman. But whether I had ſhewn an over exultation, which provoked his ſpleen; or whether he was ſeiſed with a ſuſpicion that I had obtruded him on Lord Marchmont, and humbled him too much; or whether there was any thing more than an unlucky fit of ill humour, I know not; but to my ſurprize, the reſult was—JOHNSON. "I ſhall not be in town to-morrow. I don't care to know about Pope." MRS. THRALE. (ſurprized as I was, and a little angry) "I ſuppoſe, Sir, Mr. Boſwell thought, that as you were to write Pope's Life, you would wiſh to know

1778. Ætat. 69. know about him." JOHNSON. "Wiſh! why yes. If it rained knowledge, I'd hold out my hand; but I would not give myſelf the trouble to go in queſt of it." There was no arguing with him at the moment. Some time afterwards he ſaid, "Lord Marchmont will call on me, and then I ſhall call on Lord Marchmont." Mr. Thrale was uneaſy at his unaccountable caprice; and told me, that if I did not take care to bring about a meeting between Lord Marchmont and him, it would never take place, which would be a great pity. I ſent a card to his Lordſhip, to be left at Johnſon's houſe, acquainting him, that Dr. Johnſon could not be in town next day, but would do himſelf the honour of waiting on him at another time. I give this account fairly, as a ſpecimen of that unhappy temper with which this great and good man had occaſionally to ſtruggle, from ſomething morbid in his conſtitution. Let the moſt cenſorious of my readers ſuppoſe himſelf to have a violent fit of the tooth-ach, or to have received a ſevere ſtroke on the ſhin-bone, and when in ſuch a ſtate to be aſked a queſtion; and if he has any candour, he will not be ſurprized at the anſwers which Johnſon ſometimes gave in moments of irritation, which, let me aſſure them, is exquiſitely painful. But it muſt not be erroneouſly ſuppoſed that he was, in the ſmalleſt degree, careleſs concerning any work which he undertook, or that he was generally thus peeviſh, It will be ſeen, that in the following year he had a very agreeable interview with Lord Marchmont, at his lordſhip's houſe; and this very afternoon he forgot any fretfulneſs, and fell into converſation as uſual.

I mentioned a reflection having been thrown out againſt four peers for having preſumed to riſe

rise in opposition to the opinion of the twelve Judges, in a cause in the House of Lords, as if that were indecent. JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no ground for censure. The peers are Judges themselves; and supposing them really to be of a different opinion, they might from duty be in opposition to the Judges, who were there only to be consulted." 1778. Ætat. 69.

In this observation I fully concurred with him; for, unquestionably, all the peers are vested with the highest judicial powers; and when they are confident that they understand a cause, are not obliged, nay ought not to acquiesce in the opinion of the ordinary law judges, or even in that of those who from their studies and experience are called the Law Lords. I consider the peers in general as I do a jury, who ought to listen with respectful attention to the sages of the law; but, if after hearing them, they have a firm opinion of their own, are bound, as honest men, to decide accordingly. Nor is it so difficult for them to understand even law questions, as is generally thought; provided they will bestow sufficient attention upon them. This observation was made by my honoured relation the late Lord Cathcart, who had spent his life in camps and courts; yet assured me, that he could form a clear opinion upon most of the causes that came before the House of Lords, "as they were so well enucleated in the cases."

Mrs. Thrale told us, that a curious clergyman of our acquaintance had discovered a licentious stanza, which Pope had originally in his "Universal Prayer," before the stanza

"What conscience dictates to be done,
"Or warns us not to do, &c.

It

1775. Ætat. 69.

It was this:

"Can ſins of moment claim the rod
"Of everlaſting fires?
"And that offend great Nature's GOD,
"Which Nature's ſelf inſpires?"

and that Dr. Johnſon obſerved, "it had been borrowed from *Guarini*." There are, indeed, in *Paſtor fido*, many ſuch flimſy ſuperficial reaſonings, as that in the two laſt lines of this ſtanza.

BOSWELL. "In that ſtanza of Pope's, '*rod of fires*,' is certainly a bad metaphor." MRS. THRALE. "And 'ſins of *moment*' is a faulty expreſſion; for its true import is *momentous*, which cannot be intended." JOHNSON. "It muſt have been written 'of *moments*.' Of *moment*, is *momentous*; of *moments*, *momentary*. I warrant you, however, Pope wrote this ſtanza, and ſome friend ſtruck it out. Boileau wrote ſome ſuch thing, and Arnaud ſtruck it out, ſaying, "*Vous gagnerez deux ou trois impies, et perdrez je ne ſais combien des honnettes gens.* Theſe fellows want to ſay a daring thing, and don't know how to go about it. Mere poets know no more of fundamental principles than—" Here he was interrupted ſomehow. Mrs. Thrale mentioned Dryden. JOHNSON. "He puzzled himſelf about predeſtination.—How fooliſh was it in Pope to give all his friendſhip to Lords, who thought they honoured him by being with him; and to chooſe ſuch Lords as Burlington, and Cobham, and Bolingbroke? Bathurſt was negative, a pleaſing man; and I have heard no ill of Marchmont: and then always ſaying, 'I do not value you for being a Lord;' which was a ſure proof that he did.

did. I never ſay, I do not value Boſwell more for being born to an eſtate, becauſe I do not care." BOSWELL. "Nor for being a Scotchman?" JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, I do value you more for being a Scotchman without the faults of Scotchmen. You would not have been ſo valuable as you are, had you not been a Scotchman." 1778. Ætat. 69.

Talking of divorces, I aſked if Othello's doctrine was not plauſible:

"He who is robb'd, not wanting what is
"ſtolen,
"Let him not know't, and he's not robb'd
"at all.

Dr. Johnſon and Mrs. Thrale joined againſt this. JOHNSON. "Aſk any man if he'd wiſh not to know of ſuch an injury." BOSWELL. "Would you tell your friend to make him unhappy?" JOHNSON. "Perhaps, Sir, I ſhould not; but that would be from prudence on my own account. A man would tell his father." BOSWELL. "Yes; becauſe he would not have ſpurious children to get any ſhare of the family inheritance. MRS. THRALE. "Or he would tell his brother." BOSWELL. "Certainly his *elder* brother." JOHNSON. "You would tell your friend of a woman's infamy, to prevent his marrying a whore: there is the ſame reaſon to tell him of his wife's infidelity, when he is married, to prevent the conſequences of impoſition. It is a breach of confidence not to tell a friend." BOSWELL. "Would you tell Mr. ——?" (naming a gentleman who aſſuredly was not in the leaſt danger of ſuch a miſerable diſgrace, though married to a fine woman.) JOHNSON. "No, Sir; becauſe it would do no good:

1778. Ætat. 69. good: he is ſo ſluggiſh, he'd never go to parliament and get through a divorce."

He ſaid of one of our friends, "He is ruining himſelf without pleaſure. A man who loſes at play, or who runs out his fortune at court, makes his eſtate leſs, in hopes of making it bigger: (I am ſure of this word, which was often uſed by him:) but it is a ſad thing to paſs through the quagmire of parſimony, to the gulph of ruin. To paſs over the flowery path of extravagance is very well."

Amongſt the numerous prints paſted on the walls of the dining-room at Streatham, was Hogarth's "Modern Midnight Converſation." I aſked him what he knew of Parſon Ford, who makes a conſpicuous figure in the riotous groupe. JOHNSON. "Sir, he was my acquaintance and relation, my mother's nephew. He had purchaſed a living in the country, but not ſimoniacally. I never ſaw him but in the country. I have been told he was a man of great parts; very profligate, but I never heard he was impious." BOSWELL. "Was there not a ſtory of his ghoſt having appeared?" JOHNSON. "Sir, it was believed. A waiter at the Hummums, in which houſe Ford died, had been abſent for ſome time, and returned, not knowing that Ford was dead. Going down to the cellar, according to the ſtory, he met him; going down again he met him a ſecond time. When he came up, he aſked ſome of the people of the houſe what Ford could be doing there. They told him Ford was dead. The waiter took a fever, in which he lay for ſome time. When he recovered, he ſaid he had a meſſage to deliver to ſome women from Ford; but he was not to tell what or to whom. He walked out; he was followed; but ſomewhere about St. Paul's

Paul's they loſt him. He came back, and ſaid he had delivered the meſſage, and the women exclaimed, 'Then we are all undone!' Dr. Pellet, who was not a credulous man, inquired into the truth of this ſtory, and he ſaid, the evidence was irreſiſtible. My wife went to the Hummums; (it is a place where people get themſelves cupped.) I believe ſhe went with intention to hear about this ſtory of Ford. At firſt they made difficulty to tell her; but after they had talked to her, ſhe came away ſatisfied that it was true. To be ſure, the man had a fever, and this viſion may have been the beginning of it. But if the meſſage to the women, and their behaviour upon it were as true as there related, there was ſomething ſupernatural. That reſts upon his word; and there it remains. 1778. Ætat. 69

After Mrs. Thrale was gone to bed, Johnſon and I ſat up late. We reſumed Sir Joſhua Reynolds's argument on Sunday laſt, that a man would be virtuous though he had no other motive than to preſerve his character. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not true: for as to this world vice does not hurt a man's character." BOSWELL. "Yes, Sir; debauching a friend's wife will." JOHNSON. "No, Sir. Who thinks the worſe of ——— for it?" BOSWELL. "Lord —— was not his friend." JOHNSON. "That is only a circumſtance, Sir; a ſlight diſtinction. He could not get into the houſe but by Lord ——. A man is choſen knight of the ſhire, not the leſs for having debauched ladies." BOSWELL. "What, Sir, if he debauched the ladies of gentlemen in the county, will not there be a general reſentment againſt him?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir. He will loſe thoſe particular gentlemen; but the reſt will not trouble their heads about

1778. Ætat. 69. about it." (warmly.) BOSWELL. "Well, Sir, I cannot think ſo." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, there is no talking with a man who will diſpute what every body knows. (angrily). Don't you know this?" BOSWELL. "No, Sir; and I wiſh to think better of your country than you repreſent it. I knew in Scotland a gentleman obliged to leave it for debauching a lady; and in one of our counties an earl's brother loſt his election, becauſe he had debauched the lady of another earl in that county, and broken the peace of a noble family."

Still he would not yield: He proceeded: "Will you not allow, Sir, that vice does not hurt a man's character ſo as to obſtruct his proſperity in life, when you know that ——— was loaded with wealth and honours; a man who had acquired his fortune by ſuch crimes, that his conſciouſneſs of them impelled him to cut his own throat." BOSWELL. "You will recollect, Sir, that Dr. Robertſon ſaid, he cut his throat becauſe he was weary of ſtill life; little things not being ſufficient to move his great mind." JOHNSON. (very angry) "Nay, Sir, what ſtuff is this? You had no more this opinion after Robertſon ſaid it, than before. I know nothing more offenſive than repeating what one knows to be fooliſh things, by way of continuing a diſpute, to ſee what a man will anſwer, to make him your butt!" (angrier ſtill) BOSWELL. "My dear Sir, I had no ſuch intention as you ſeem to ſuſpect; I had not indeed. Might not this nobleman have felt every thing 'weary, ſtale, flat, and unprofitable,' as Hamlet ſays?" JOHNSON. "Nay, if you are to bring in gabble, I'll talk no more. I will not, upon my honour." My readers will decide upon this diſpute.

Next

Next morning I ſtated to Mrs. Thrale at breakfaſt, before he came down, the diſpute of laſt night as to the influence of character upon ſucceſs in life. She ſaid he was certainly wrong; and told me, that a Baronet loſt an election in Wales, becauſe he had debauched the ſiſter of a gentleman in the county, whom he made one of his daughters invite as her companion at his ſeat in the country, when his lady and his other children were in London. But ſhe would not encounter Johnſon upon the ſubject. 1778. Ætat. 69.

I ſtaid all this day with him at Streatham.—He talked a great deal in a very good humour.

Looking at Meſſrs. Dilly's ſplendid edition of Lord Cheſterfield's miſcellaneous works, he laughed, and ſaid, "Here now are two ſpeeches aſcribed to him, both of which were written by me: and the beſt of it is, they have found out that one is like Demoſthenes, and the other like Cicero."

He cenſured Lord Kames's "Sketches of the Hiſtory of Man," for miſrepreſenting Clarendon's account of the appearance of Sir George Villiers's ghoſt, as if Clarendon were weakly credulous; when the truth is, that Clarendon only ſays, that the ſtory was upon a better foundation of credit, than uſually ſuch diſcourſes are founded upon; nay, ſpeaks thus of the perſon who was reported to have ſeen the viſion, "the poor man, *if he had been at all waking*;" which Lord Kames has omitted. He added, "in this book it is maintained that virtue is natural to man, and that if we would but conſult our own hearts we ſhould be virtuous. Now after conſulting our own hearts all we can, and with all the helps we have, we find how few of us are virtuous. This is ſaying a thing which all mankind know to be true." Boswell. "Is not modeſty

1778. Ætat. 69. deſty natural." JOHNSON. "I cannot ſay, Sir, as we find no people quite in a ſtate of nature; but I think the more they are taught, the more modeſt they are. The French are a groſs, ill-bred, untaught people; a lady there will ſpit on the floor and rub it with her foot. What I gained by being in France was, learning to be better ſatisfied with my own country. Time may be employed to more advantage from nineteen to twenty-four almoſt in any way than in travelling; when you ſet travelling againſt mere negation, againſt doing nothing, it is better to be ſure; but how much more would a young man improve were he to ſtudy during thoſe years.—Indeed, if a young man is wild, and muſt run after women and bad company, it is better this ſhould be done abroad, as on his return, he can break off ſuch connections, and begin at home a new man, with a character to form, and acquaintances to make. How little does travelling ſupply to the converſation of any man who has travelled? How little to Beauclerk?" BOSWELL. What ſay you to Lord ———?" JOHNSON. "I never but once heard him talk of what he had ſeen, and that was of a large ſerpent in one of the pyramids of Egypt." BOSWELL. "Well, I happened to hear him tell the ſame thing, which made me mention him."

I talked of a country life. JOHNSON. "Were I to live in the country I would not devote myſelf to the acquiſition of popularity; I would live in a much better way, much more happily; I would have my time at my own command." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, is it not a ſad thing to be at a diſtance from all our literary friends?"—JOHNSON. "Sir, you will by and by have enough of this converſation, which now delights you ſo much."

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As he was a zealous friend of ſubordination, he was at all times watchful to repreſs the vulgar cant againſt the manners of the great; "High people, Sir, (ſaid he,) are the beſt; take a hundred ladies of quality, you'll find them better wives, better mothers, more willing to ſacrifice their own pleaſure to their children, than a hundred other women. Tradeſwomen (I mean the wives of tradeſmen) in the city, who are worth from ten to fifteen thouſand pounds, are the worſt creatures upon the earth, groſsly ignorant, and thinking viſciouſneſs faſhionable. Farmers, I think, are often worthleſs fellows. Few lords will cheat; and if they do, they'll be aſhamed of it: farmers cheat and are not aſhamed of it; they have all the ſenſual vices of the nobility, with cheating into the bargain. There is as much fornication and adultery amongſt farmers as amongſt noblemen." BOSWELL. "The notion of the world, Sir, however is, that the morals of the women of quality are worſe than thoſe in lower ſtations." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, the licentiouſneſs of one woman of quality makes more noiſe than that of a number of women in lower ſtations; then, Sir, you are to conſider the malignity of women in the city againſt women of quality, which will make them believe any thing of them, ſuch as that they call their coachmen to bed. No, Sir, ſo far as I have obſerved, the higher in rank, the richer ladies are, they are the better inſtructed and the more virtuous." 1778. Ætat. 69.

This year the Rev. Mr. Horne publiſhed his "Letter to Mr. Dunning, on the Engliſh Particle;" Johnſon read it, and though not treated in it with ſufficient reſpect, he had candour enough to ſay to Mr. Seward, "Were I to make a new edition of my Dictionary, I would adopt

1778. Ætat. 69. ſeveral * of Mr. Horne's etymologies; I hope they did not put the dog in the pillory for his libel; he has too much literature for that."

On Saturday, May 16, I dined with him at Mr. Beauclerk's, with Mr. Langton, Mr. Steevens, Dr. Higgins, and ſome others. I regret very feelingly every inſtance of my remiſſneſs in recording his *memorabilia*; I am afraid it is in the condition of humanity (as Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, once obſerved to me, after having made an admirable ſpeech in the Houſe of Commons, which was highly applauded, but which he afterwards perceived might have been better:) "that we are more uneaſy from thinking of our wants, than happy in thinking of our acquiſitions." This is an unreaſonable mode of diſturbing our tranquillity, and ſhould be corrected; let me then comfort myſelf with the large treaſure of Johnſon's converſation which I have preſerved for my own enjoyment and that of the world, and let me exhibit what I have upon each occaſion, whether more or leſs, whether a bulſe, or only a few ſparks of diamond.

He ſaid, "Dr. Mead lived more in the broad ſun-ſhine of life than almoſt any man."

The diſaſter of General Burgoyne's army was then the common topic of converſation. I was aſked why piling their arms was inſiſted upon as a matter of ſuch conſequence, when it ſeemed to be a circumſtance ſo inconſiderable in itſelf. JOHNSON.. "Why, Sir, a French author ſays, '*Il y a beaucoup de puerilités dans la guerre.*."— All diſtinctions are trifles, becauſe great things

* In Mr. Horne Tooke's enlargement of that "Letter," which he has ſince publiſhed with the title of "Επεα πτεροεντα or, the Diverſions of Purley;" he mentions this compliment, as if Dr. Johnſon inſtead of *ſeveral* of his etymologies had ſaid *all*. His recollection having thus magnified it, ſhews how ambitious he was of the approbation of ſo great a man.

can

can ſeldom occur, and thoſe diſtinctions are ſettled by cuſtom. A ſavage would as willingly have his meat ſent to him in the kitchen, as eat it at the table here; as men become civiliſed, various modes of denoting honourable preference are invented." 1778. Ætat. 69.

He this day made the obſervations upon the ſimilarity between "Raſſelas" and "Candide," which I have inſerted in its proper place, when conſidering his admirable philoſophical Romance. He ſaid "*Candide*" he thought had more power in it than any thing that *Voltaire* had written.

He ſaid, "The lyrical part of Horace never can be perfectly tranſlated; ſo much of the excellence is in the numbers and the expreſſion. Francis has done it the beſt; I'll take his, five out of ſix, againſt them all."

On Sunday, May 17, I preſented to him Mr. Fullarton, who has ſince diſtinguiſhed himſelf ſo much in India, to whom he naturally talked of travels, as Mr. Brydone accompanied him in his tour to Sicily and Malta. He ſaid, "The information which we have from modern travellers is much more authentic than what we had from ancient travellers; ancient travellers gueſſed; modern travellers meaſure. The Swiſs admit that there is but one error in Stanyan. If Brydone were more attentive to his Bible, he would be a good traveller."

He ſaid, "Lord Chatham was a Dictator; he poſſeſſed the power of putting the State in motion; now there is no power, all order is relaxed." Boswell. "Is there no hope of a change to the better?" Johnson. "Why, yes, Sir, when we are weary of this relaxation. So the City of London will appoint its Mayors again by ſeniority." Boswell. "But is not that taking a mere chance for a good or a bad Mayor?"

Johnson.

1778. Ætat. 69. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; but the evil of competition is greater than that of the worſt Mayor that can come; beſides, there is no more reaſon to ſuppoſe that the choice of a rabble will be right, than that chance will be right."

On Tueſday, May 19, I was to ſet out for Scotland in the evening. He was engaged to dine with me at Mr. Dilly's, I waited upon him to remind him of his appointment and attend him thither; he gave me ſome ſalutary counſel, and recommended vigorous reſolution againſt any deviation of moral duty. BOSWELL. "But you would not have me to bind myſelf by a ſolemn obligation?" JOHNSON. "What! a vow —O, no, Sir, a vow is a horrible thing, it is a ſnare for ſin. The man who cannot go to Heaven without a vow—may go—" Here, ſtanding erect, in the middle of his library, and rolling grand, his pauſe was truly a curious compound of the ſolemn and the ludricrous; he half-whiſtled in his uſual way, when pleaſant, and he pauſed as if checked by religious awe. Methought he would have added—to Hell—but was reſtrained. I humoured the dilemma.—"What! Sir, (ſaid I,) '*In cœlum juſſeris ibit*;" alluding to his imitation of it,

"And bid him go to Hell, to Hell he goes."

I had mentioned to him a ſlight fault in his noble "Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal," a too near recurrence of the verb *ſpread* in his deſcription of the young Enthuſiaſt at College:

"Through all his veins the fever of renown,
"*Spreads* from the ſtrong contagion of the gown;
"O'er Bodley's dome his future labours *ſpread*,
"And Bacon's manſion trembles o'er his head."

He had deſired me to change *ſpreads* to *burns*, I now had it done with his own hand*. I thought

* The ſlip of paper on which he made the correction, is depoſited

thought this alteration not only cured the fault but was more poetical, as it might carry an illuſion to the ſhirt by which Hercules was inflamed. 1778. Ætat. 69.

We had a quiet comfortable meeting at Mr. Dilly's; nobody there but ourſelves, Mr. Dilly mentioned ſomebody having wiſhed that Milton's "Tractate on Education" ſhould be printed along with his Poems in the edition of the Engliſh Poets then going on. JOHNSON. "It would be breaking in upon the plan; but would be of no great conſequence. So far as it would be any thing it would be wrong. Education in England has been in danger of being hurt by two of its greateſt men, Milton and Locke.—Milton's plan is impracticable, and I ſuppoſe has never been tried. Locke's, I fancy has been tried often enough; but is very imperfect, it gives too much to one ſide, and too little to literature. I ſhall do what I can for Dr. Watts; but my materials are very ſcanty. His poems are by no means his beſt works; I cannot praiſe his poetry itſelf highly; but I can praiſe its deſign."

My illuſtrious friend and I parted with aſſurances of affectionate regard.

Johnſon maintained a long and intimate friendſhip with Mr. Welch, who ſucceeded the celebrated Henry Fielding as one of his Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace for Weſtminſter; kept a regular office for the police of that great diſtrict; and diſcharged his important truſt, for many years, faithfully and ably. Johnſon, who had an eager and unceaſing curioſity to know human life in all its variety, told me that he attended

depoſited by me in the noble library to which it relates, and to which I have preſented other pieces of his handwriting.

Mr.

1778. Ætat. 69. Mr. Welch in his office for a whole winter, to hear the examinations of the culprits; but that he found an almoſt uniform tenor of misfortune, wretchedneſs, and profligacy. Mr. Welch's health being impaired, he was adviſed to try the effect of a warm climate; and Johnſon, by his intereſt with Mr. Chamier, procured him leave of abſence to go to Italy, and a promiſe that the penſion or ſalary of two hundred pounds a year, which government allowed him, ſhould not be diſcontinued. Mr. Welch accordingly went abroad, accompanied by his daughter Anne, a young lady of uncommon talents and literature. I have been fortunate enough, as this work was paſſing through the preſs, to obtain the following letter; which, although the firſt part of my narrative of this year was printed off before I received it, will now come in with very little deviation from chronological order.

To SAUNDERS WELCH, *Eſq.*

At the Engliſh Coffe-houſe, ROME.

"DEAR SIR,

"TO have ſuffered one of my beſt and deareſt friends to paſs almoſt two years in foreign countries without a letter, has a very ſhameful appearance of inattention. But the truth is, that there was no particular time in which I had any thing particular to ſay; and general expreſſions of good will, I hope, our long friendſhip is grown too ſolid to want.

"Of public affairs you have information from the news-papers wherever you go, for the Engliſh keep no ſecret; and of other things, Mrs. Nollekens informs you. My intelligence could therefore

therefore be of no uſe; and Miſs Nancy's letters made it unneceſſary to write to you for information: I was likewiſe for ſome time out of humour to find that motion, and nearer approaches to the ſun, did not reſtore your health ſo faſt as I expected. Of your health, the accounts have lately been more pleaſing; and I have the gratification of imagining to myſelf a length of years which I hope you have gained, and of which the enjoyment will be improved, by a vaſt acceſſion of images and obſervations which your journeys and various reſidence have enabled you to make and accumulate. You have travelled with this felicity, almoſt peculiar to yourſelf, that your companion is not to part from you at your journey's end; but you are to live on together, to help each other's recollection, and to ſupply each other's omiſſions. The world has few greater pleaſures than that which two friends enjoy, in tracing back, at ſome diſtant time, thoſe tranſactions and events through which they have paſſed together. One of the old man's miſeries is, that he cannot eaſily find a companion able to partake with him of the paſt. You and your fellow-traveller have this comfort in ſtore, that your converſation will be not eaſily exhauſted; one will always be glad to ſay what the other will always be willing to hear. 1778. Ætat. 69.

"That you may enjoy this pleaſure long, your health muſt have your conſtant attention. I ſuppoſe you propoſe to return this year. There is no need of haſte: do not come hither before the height of ſummer, that you may fall gradually into the inconveniences of your native climate. July ſeems to be the proper month.—Auguſt and September will prepare you for the winter. After having travelled ſo far to find health, you muſt take care not to loſe it at home

—and

1778. —and I hope a little care will effectually pre-
Ætat. 69. ſerve it.

"Miſs Nancy has doubtleſs kept a conſtant and copious journal. She muſt not expect to be welcome when ſhe returns without a great maſs of information. Let her review her journal often, and ſet down what ſhe finds herſelf to have omitted, that ſhe may truſt to memory as little as poſſible, for memory is ſoon confuſed by a quick ſucceſſion of things; and ſhe will grow every day leſs confident of the truth of her own narratives, unleſs ſhe can recur to ſome written memorials. If ſhe has ſatisfied herſelf with hints, inſtead of full repreſentations, let her ſupply the deficiencies now while her memory is yet freſh, and while her father's memory may help her. If ſhe obſerves this direction, ſhe will not have travelled in vain; for ſhe will bring home a book with which ſhe may entertain herſelf to the end of life. If it were not now too late, I would adviſe her to note the impreſſion which the firſt ſight of any thing new and wonderful made upon her mind. Let her now ſet her thoughts down as ſhe can recollect them; for faint as they may already be, they will grow every day fainter.

"Perhaps I do not flatter myſelf unreaſonably when I imagine that you may wiſh to know ſomething of me. I can gratify your benevolence with no account of health. The hand of time, or of diſeaſe, is very heavy upon me. I paſs reſtleſs and uneaſy nights, harraſſed with convulſions of my breaſt, and flatulencies at my ſtomach; and reſtleſs nights make heavy days. But nothing will be mended by complaints, and therefore I will make an end. When we meet, we will try to forget our cares and our maladies, and contribute, as we can, to the cheerfulneſs

of

of each other. If I had gone with you, I believe I ſhould have been better; but I do not know that it was in my power. 1778. Ætat. 69.

I am, dear Sir,

Your moſt humble ſervant,

" Feb. 3, 1778. SAM JOHNSON."

This letter, while it gives admirable advice how to travel to the beſt advantage, and will therefore be of very general uſe, is another eminent proof of Johnſon's warm and affectionate heart*.

I wrote to him on the 25th of May, from Thorpe, in Yorkſhire, one of the ſeats of Mr. Boſville, and gave him an account of my having paſſed a day at Lincoln, unexpectedly, and therefore without having any letters of introduction, but that I had been honoured with civilities from the Reverend Mr. Simpſon, an acquaintance of his, and Captain Broadley, of the Lincolnſhire Militia; but more particularly from the Reverend Dr. Gordon, the Chancellor, who firſt received me with great politeneſs as a ſtranger, and when I had informed him who I was, entertained me at his houſe with the moſt flattering attention; I alſo expreſſed the pleaſure with which I had found that our worthy friend Langton was highly eſteemed in his own county town.

* The friendſhip between Mr. Welch and him was unbroken. Mr. Welch died not many months before him, and bequeathed him five guineas for a ring, which Johnſon received with tenderneſs, as a kind memorial. His regard was conſtant for his friend Mr. Welch's daughters; of whom, Jane is married to Mr. Nollekens the ſtatuary, whoſe merit is too well known to require any praiſe from me.

To

1778. Ætat. 69.

To Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, June 18, 1788.

"SINCE my return to Scotland I have been again at Lanark, and have had more converſation with Thomſon's ſiſter. It is ſtrange that Murdoch, who was his intimate friend, ſhould have miſtaken his mother's maiden name, which he ſays was Hume, whereas Hume was the name of his grand-mother by the mother's ſide. His mother's name was Beatrix Trotter*, a daughter of Mr. Trotter of Fogo, a ſmall proprietor of land. Thomſon had one brother, whom he had with him in England as his amanuenſis; but he was ſeized with a conſumption, and having returned to Scotland, to try what his native air would do for him, died young.—He had three ſiſters, one married to Mr. Bell, miniſter of the pariſh of Strathaven; one to Mr. Craig, father of the ingenious architect, who gave the plan of the new town of Edinburgh; and one to Mr. Thomſon, maſter of the grammar-ſchool at Lanark. He was of a humane and benevolent diſpoſition; not only ſent valuable preſents to his ſiſters, but an yearly allowance in money, and was always wiſhing to have it in his power to do them more good. Lord Lyttelton's obſervation, 'that he lothed much to write,' was very true. His letters to his ſiſter, Mrs. Thomſon, were not frequent, and in one of them he ſays, 'All my friends who know me, know how backward I am to write letters; and never impute the negligence of my hand to the coldneſs of my heart.' I ſend you

* Dr. Johnſon was by no means attentive to minute accuracy in his "Lives of the Poets;" for notwithſtanding my having detected this miſtake, he has continued it.

a copy

a copy of the laſt letter which ſhe had from him; ſhe never heard that he had any intention of going into holy orders. From this late interview with his ſiſter, I think much more favourably of him, as I hope you will. I am eager to ſee more of your Prefaces to the Poets; I ſolace myſelf with the few proof-ſheets which I have. 1778. Ætat. 69.

"I ſend another parcel of Lord Hailes's 'Annals,' which you will pleaſe to return to me as ſoon as you conveniently can. He ſays, 'he wiſhes you would cut a little deeper;' but he may be proud that there is ſo little occaſion to uſe the critical knife. I ever am, my dear Sir,

"Your faithful and affectionate
"Humble ſervant,
"JAMES BOSWELL."

Mr. Langton has been pleaſed, at my requeſt, to favour me with ſome particulars of Dr. Johnſon's viſit to Warley-Camp, where this gentleman was at the time ſtationed, as Captain in the Lincolnſhire militia.

"It was in the ſummer of the year 1778, that he complied with my invitation to come down to the camp at Warley, and he ſtaid with me about a week; the ſcene appeared, notwithſtanding a great degree of ill-health that he ſeemed to labour under, to intereſt and amuſe him, as agreeing with the diſpoſition that I believe you know he conſtantly manifeſted towards enquiring into ſubjects of the military kind. He ſate, with a patient degree of attention, to obſerve the proceedings of a regimental court-martial, that happened to be called in the time of his ſtay with us; and one night, as late as at eleven o'clock, he accompanied the Major

1778. Ætat. 69. of the regiment in going what are ſtyled the *Rounds*, where he might obſerve the forms of viſiting the guards, for the ſeeing that they and their ſentries are ready in their duty on their ſeveral poſts. He took occaſion to converſe at times on military topicks, one in particular, that I ſee the mention of, in your 'Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides,' which lies open before me*, as to gun-powder; which he ſpoke of to the ſame effect, in part, that you relate.

"On one occaſion, when the regiment were going through their exerciſe, he went quite cloſe to the men at one of the extremities of it, and watched all their practices attentively; and when he came away, his remark was, 'The men indeed do load their muſquets and fire with wonderful celerity.' He was likewiſe particular in requiring to know what was the weight of the muſquet-balls in uſe, and within what diſtance they might be expected to take effect when fired off.

"In walking among the tents, and obſerving the difference between thoſe of the officers and private men, he ſaid that the ſuperiority of accommodation of the better conditions of life, to that of the inferior ones, was never exhibited to him in ſo diſtinct a view. The civilities paid to him in the camp were, from the gentlemen of the Lincolnſhire regiment, one of the officers of which accommodated him with a tent in which he ſlept; and from General Hall, who very courteouſly invited him to dine with him, where he appeared to be very well pleaſed with his entertainment, and the civilities he received on the part of the General †; the at-

* Third edition, p. 111.

† When I one day at Court expreſſed to General Hall my ſenſe of the honour he had done my friend, he politely anſwered, "Sir, I did *myſelf* honour."

tention

tention likewiſe of the General's aid-de-camp, Captain Smith, ſeemed to be very welcome to him, as appeared by their engaging in a great deal of diſcourſe together. The gentlemen of the Eaſt York regiment likewiſe on being informed of his coming, ſolicited his company at dinner, but by that time he had fixed his departure, ſo that he could not comply with the invitation." 1778. Ætat. 69.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I have received two letters from you, of which the ſecond complains of the neglect ſhown to the firſt. You muſt not tye your friends to ſuch punctual correſpondence. You have all poſſible aſſurances of my affection and eſteem; and there ought to be no need of reiterated profeſſions. When it may happen that I can give you either counſel or comfort, I hope it will never happen to me that I ſhould neglect you; but you muſt not think me criminal or cold if I ſay nothing, when I have nothing to ſay.

"You are now happy enough. Mrs. Boſwell is recovered; and I congratulate you upon the probability of her long life. If general approbation will add any thing to your enjoyment, I can tell you that I have heard you mentioned as *a man whom every body likes.* I think life has little more to give.

"——— has gone to his regiment. He has laid down his coach, and talks of making more contractions of his expence: how he will ſucceed I know not. It is difficult to reform a houſehold gradually; it may be better done by a ſyſtem totally new. I am afraid he has always ſomething to hide. When we preſſed him

1778. Ætat. 69. him to go to ———, he objected the neceſſity of attending his navigation; yet he could talk of going to Aberdeen, a place not much nearer his navigation. I believe he cannot bear the thought of living at ——— in a ſtate of diminution; and of appearing among the gentlemen of the neighbourhood *ſhorn of his beams.* This is natural, but it is cowardly. What I told him of the encreaſing expence of a growing family ſeems to have ſtruck him. He certainly had gone on with very confuſed views, and we have, I think, ſhown him that he is wrong; though, with the common deficience of adviſers, we have not ſhown him how to do right.

"I wiſh you would a little correct or reſtrain your imagination, and imagine that happineſs, ſuch as life admits, may be had at other places as well as London. Without aſſerting ſtoiciſm, it may be ſaid, that it is our buſineſs to exempt ourſelves as much as we can from the power of external things. There is but one ſolid baſis of happineſs; and that is, the reaſonable hope of a happy futurity. This may be had every where.

"I do not blame your preference of London to other places, for it is really to be preferred, if the choice is free; but few have the choice of their place or their manner of life; and mere pleaſure ought not to be the prime motive of action.

"Mrs. Thrale, poor thing, has a daughter. Mr. Thrale diſlikes the times, like the reſt of us. Mrs. Williams is ſick; Mrs. Deſmoulins is poor. I have miſerable nights. Nobody is well but Mr. Levett. I am, dear Sir,

"Your moſt, &c.

London, July 3, 1778. SAM. JOHNSON."

In

In the courſe of this year there was a difference between him and his friend Mr. Strahan; the particulars of which it is unneceſſary to relate. Their reconciliation was communicated to me in a letter from Mr. Strahan, in the following words: 1778. Ætat. 69.

"The notes I ſhewed you that paſſed between him and me were dated in March laſt. The matter lay dormant till July 27, when he wrote to me as follows:

To WILLIAM STRAHAN, *Eſq.*

'SIR,

'IT would be very fooliſh for us to continue ſtrangers any longer. You can never by perſiſtency make wrong right. If I reſented too acrimoniouſly, I reſented only to yourſelf. Nobody ever ſaw or heard what I wrote. You ſaw that my anger was over, for in a day or two I came to your houſe. I have given you longer time; and I hope you have made ſo good uſe of it, as to be no longer on evil terms with, Sir,

'Your, &c.

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

On this I called upon him, and he has ſince dined with me."

After this time, the ſame friendſhip as formerly continued between Dr. Johnſon and Mr. Strahan. My friend mentioned to me a little circumſtance of his attention, which, though we may ſmile at it, muſt be allowed to have its foundation in a nice and true knowledge of human life. "When I write to Scotland, (ſaid he,)

1778. Ætat. 69. I employ Strahan to frank my letters, that he may have the conſequence of appearing a parliament-man among his countrymen."

To CAPTAIN LANGTON* *at Warley-Camp.*

"DEAR SIR,

"WHEN I recollect how long ago I was received with ſo much kindneſs at Warley-Common, I am aſhamed that I have not made ſome enquiries after my friends.

"Pray how many ſheep-ſtealers did you convict? and how did you puniſh them? when are you to be cantoned in better habitations? The air grows cold, and the ground damp. Longer ſtay in the camp cannot be without much danger to the health of the common men, if even the officers can eſcape.

"You ſee that Dr. Percy is now Dean of Carliſle; about five hundred a year, with a power of preſenting himſelf to ſome good living. He is provided for.

"The ſeſſion of the club is to commence with that of the parliament. Mr. Banks deſires to be admitted; he will be a very honourable acceſſion.

"Did the King pleaſe you? The Coxheath men, I think, have ſome reaſon to complain: Reynolds ſays your camp is better than theirs.

"I hope you find yourſelf able to encounter this weather. Take care of your own health; and, as you can, of your men. Be pleaſed to make my compliments to all the gentlemen

* Dr. Johnſon here addreſſes his worthy friend, Bennet Langton, Eſq. as a Captain of the Lincolnſhire militia.

whoſe

whoſe notice I have had, and whoſe kindneſs I have experienced. I am, dear Sir, 1778. Ætat. 69.

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"Oct. 31, 1778. SAM. JOHNSON."

I wrote to him on the 18th of Auguſt, the 18th of September, and the 6th of November; informing him of my having had another ſon born, whom I had called James; that I had paſſed ſome time at Auchinleck; that the Counteſs of Loudoun, now in her ninety-ninth year, was as freſh as when he ſaw her, and remembered him with reſpect; and that his mother by adoption, the Counteſs of Eglintoune, had ſaid to me, "Tell Mr. Johnſon I love him exceedingly;" that I had again ſuffered much from bad ſpirits; and that it was very long ſince I heard from him, I was not a little uneaſy.

The continuance of his regard for his friend Dr. Burney, appears from the following letters:

To the Reverend Dr. WHEELER, *Oxford.*

"DEAR SIR,

"DR. BURNEY, who brings this paper, is engaged in a Hiſtory of Muſick; and having been told by Dr. Markham of ſome MSS. relating to his ſubject, which are in the library of your College, is deſirous to examine them. He is my friend; and therefore I take the liberty of intreating your favour and aſſiſtance in his enquiry: I can aſſure you, with great confidence, that if you knew him he would not want any intervenient ſolicitation to obtain the kindneſs of one who loves learning and virtue as you love them.

"I have been flattering myſelf all the ſummer with the hope of paying my annual viſit to

1778. Ætat. 69. my friends, but ſomething has obſtructed me: I ſtill hope not to be long without ſeeing you. I ſhould be glad of a little literary talk; and glad to ſhew you, by the frequency of my viſits, how eagerly I love it, when you talk it. I am, dear Sir,

"Your humble ſervant,

"London, Nov. 2, 1778. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the Rev. Dr. EDWARDS, *Oxford.*

"SIR,

"THE bearer, Dr. Burney, has had ſome account of a Welſh manuſcript in the Bodleian library, from which he hopes to gain ſome materials for his Hiſtory of Muſick; but being ignorant of the language, is at a loſs where to find aſſiſtance. I make no doubt but you, Sir, can help him through his difficulties, and therefore take the liberty of recommending him to your favour, as I am ſure you will find him a man worthy of every civility that can be ſhewn, and every benefit that can be conferred.

"But we muſt not let Welſh drive us from Greek. What comes of Xenophon? If you do not like the trouble of publiſhing the book, do not let your commentaries be loſt; contrive that they may be publiſhed ſomewhere. I am, Sir,

"Your humble ſervant,

"London, Nov. 2, 1778. SAM. JOHNSON."

Theſe letters procured Dr. Burney great kindneſs and friendly offices from both of theſe gentlemen, not only on that occaſion, but in future viſits to the univerſity. The ſame year Dr. Johnſon not only wrote to Dr. Joſeph Warton in favour of Dr. Burney's youngeſt ſon, who was

was to be placed in the college there, but accompanied him to Winchester, when he went thither. 1778. Ætat. 69.

We surely cannot but admire the benevolent exertions of this great and good man, especially when we consider how grievously he was afflicted with bad health, and how uncomfortable his home was made by the perpetual jarring of those whom he charitably accommodated under his roof. He has sometimes suffered me to talk jocularly of his groupe of females, and call them his *seraglio*. He thus mentions them, together with honest Levett, in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale†: "Williams hates every body; Levett hates Desmoulins, and does not love Williams; Desmoulins hates them both; Poll* loves none of them."

To James Boswell, *Esq.*

"Dear Sir,

"IT is indeed a long time since I wrote, and I think you have some reason to complain; however, you must not let small things disturb you, when you have such a fine addition to your happiness as a new boy, and I hope your lady's health restored by bringing him. It seems very probable that a little care will now restore her, if any remains of her complaints are left.

"You seem, if I understand your letter, to be gaining ground at Auchinleck, an incident that would give me great delight.

* * * * * *

"When any fit of anxiety, or gloominess or perversion of mind, lays hold upon you, make it a rule not to publish it by complaints, but ex-

† Vol. II. p. 38. * Miss Ca michael.

ert

1778. Ætat. 69. ert your whole care to hide it, by endeavouring to hide it, you will drive it away. Be always busy.

"The club is to meet with the Parliament; we talk of electing Banks, the traveller; he will be a reputable member.

"Langton has been encamped with his company of militia on Warley Common; I spent five days amongst them; he signalized himself as a diligent officer, and has very high respect in the regiment. He presided when I was there at a court-martial; he is now quartered in Hertfordshire; his lady and little ones are in Scotland. Paoli came to the camp and commended the soldiers.

"Of myself I have no great matter to say, my health is not restored, my nights are restless and tedious. The best night that I have had these twenty years was at Fort-Augustus.

"I hope soon to send you a few lives to read. I am dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate,

"Nov. 21, 1778.* SAM. JOHNSON."

About this time Mr. John Hussey, who had been some time in trade, and is now a clergyman of the church of England, being about to undertake a journey to Aleppo, and other parts of the East, which he accomplished, Dr. Johnson honoured him with the following letter:

To Mr. JOHN HUSSEY.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have sent you the 'Grammar', and have left you two books more, by which I hope to be

*Notwithstanding all my anxious attention to chronological order, I find that I have ascribed to this year the publication of his Prefaces to the Poets, which in fact came out early in the next year.

remem-

remembered, write my name in them; we may perhaps ſee each other no more, you part with my good wiſhes, nor do I deſpair of ſeeing you return. Let no opportunities of vice corrupt you: let no bad example ſeduce you; let the blindneſs of Mahometans confirm you in Chriſtianity. God bleſs you. I am, dear Sir,

"Your affectionate humble ſervant,

"Dec. 29, 1778. SAM. JOHNSON."

1778. Ætat. 69.

Johnſon this year expreſſed great ſatisfaction at the publication of the firſt volume of "Diſcourſes to the Royal Academy," by Sir Joſhua Reynolds, whom he always conſidered as one of his literary ſchool. Much praiſe indeed is due to thoſe excellent diſcourſes, which are ſo univerſally admired, and for which the author lately received from the Empreſs of Ruſſia a gold ſnuff-box, adorned with her profile in *bas relief*, ſet in diamonds; and containing what is infinitely more valuable, a ſlip of paper, on which are written with her Imperial Majeſty's own hand, the following words: *Pour le Chevalier Reynolds en temoignage du contentement que j'ai reſſentie à la lecture de ſes excellens diſcours ſur la peinture.*"

In 1779, Johnſon proceeded, at intervals, in writing his "Lives of the Poets." 1779.

On the 22d of January, I wrote to him on ſeveral topicks, and mentioned that as he had been ſo good as to permit me to have the proof-ſheets of his "Lives of the Poets," I had written to his ſervant Francis, to take care of them for me.

Mr.

1779. Ætat. 70.

Mr. BOSWELL *to Dr.* JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR, Edinburgh. Feb. 2, 1779.

"GARRICK's death is a ſtriking event; not that we ſhould be ſurpriſed with the death of any man, who has lived ſixty-two years. But becauſe there was a *vivacity* in our late celebrated friend, which drove away the thoughts of *death* from any aſſociation with *him*; I am ſure you will be tenderly affected with his departure; and I would wiſh to hear from you upon the ſubject. I was obliged to him in my days of effervescence, in London, when poor Derrick was my governour; and ſince that time I received many civilities from him. Do you remember how pleaſing it was, when I received a letter from him at Inverary, upon our firſt return to civilized living after our Hebridean journey. I ſhall always remember him with affection as well as admiration.

"On Saturday laſt, being the 30th of January, I drank coffee and old port, and had ſolemn converſation with the Reverend Mr. Falconer, a non-juring biſhop, a very learned and worthy man. He gave two toaſts, which you will believe I drank with cordiality, Dr. Samuel Johnſon, and Flora Macdonald. I ſat about four hours with him, and it was really as if I had been living in the laſt century. The Epiſcopal Church of Scotland, though faithful to the royal houſe of Stuart, has never accepted of any *congé d'élire*, ſince the Revolution; it is the only true Epiſcopal Church in Scotland, as it has its own ſucceſſion of biſhops. For as to the epiſcopal clergy who take the oaths to the preſent government, they indeed follow the rites of the Church of England, but, as biſhop Falconer obſerved, they are not *Epiſcopals*; for they

they are under no biſhop, as a biſhop cannot have authority beyond his dioceſe. 1779. Ætat. 70.

"This venerable gentleman, did me the honour to dine with me yeſterday, and he laid his hands upon the heads of my little ones. We had a good deal of curious literary converſation, particularly about Mr. Thomas Ruddiman, with whom he lived in great friendſhip.

"Any freſh inſtance of the uncertainty of life makes one embrace more cloſely a valuable friend. My dear and much reſpected Sir, may God preſerve you long in this world while I am in it. I am ever,

"Your much obliged,

"And affectionate humble ſervant,

"James Boswell."

On the 23d of February I wrote to him again, complaining of his ſilence as I had heard he was ill, and I announced my intention of ſoon being again in London.

To James Boswell, *Eſq.*

"Dear Sir,

"WHY ſhould you take ſuch delight to make a buſtle, to write to Mr. Thrale that I am negligent, and to Francis to do what is ſo very unneceſſary. Thrale, you may be ſure cared not about it; and I ſhall ſpare Francis the trouble, by ordering a ſet both of the Lives and Poets to dear Mrs. Boſwell*, in acknowledgment of her marmalade. Perſuade her to accept them, and accept them kindly. If I thought ſhe would receive them ſcornfully, I would ſend them to Miſs Boſwell, who, I hope, has yet none of her mamma's ill-will to me.

* He ſent a ſet elegantly bound and gilt, which was received as a very handſome preſent.

"I would

1779. Ætat. 70. "I would ſend ſets of Lives, four volumes, to ſome other friends, to Lord Hailes firſt. His ſecond volume lies by my bed-ſide; a book ſurely of great labour, and to every juſt thinker of great delight. Write me word to whom I ſhall ſend beſides; would it pleaſe Lord Auchinleck? Mrs. Thrale waits in the coach.

"I am, dear Sir, &c.

"March 13, 1779. SAM. JOHNSON."

This letter croſſed me on the road to London, where I arrived on Monday, March 15, and next morning at a late hour, found Dr. Johnſon ſitting over his tea, attended by Mrs. Deſmoulins, Mr. Levett, and a clergyman, who had come to ſubmit poetical pieces to his reviſion. It is wonderful what a number and variety of writers, ſome of them even unknown to him, prevailed on his good-nature to look over their works, and ſuggeſt corrections and improvements. My arrival interrupted for a little while the important buſineſs of this true repreſentative of Bayes; upon its being reſumed, I found that the ſubject under immediate conſideration was a tranſlation, yet in manuſcript of the *Carmen Seculare* of Horace, which had this year been ſet to muſick, and performed as a publick entertainment in London, for the joint benefit of Monſieur Philidor and Signor Baretti. When Johnſon had done, the authour aſked him bluntly, "If upon the whole it was a good tranſlation?" Johnſon, whoſe regard for truth was uncommonly ſtrict, ſeemed to be puzzled for a moment, what anſwer to make, as he certainly could not honeſtly commend the performance: with exquiſite addreſs he evaded the queſtion thus, "Sir, I do not ſay that it may not be made a very good tranſlation." Here nothing whatever

ever in favour of the performance was affirmed, and yet the writer was not ſhocked. A printed "Ode to the Warlike Genius of Britain," came next in review; the bard was a lank bony figure, with ſhort black hair; he was writhing himſelf in agitation, while Johnſon read, and ſhewing his teeth in a grin of earneſtneſs, exclaimed in broken ſentences, and in a keen ſharp tone, "Is that poetry, Sir?—Is it Pindar?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, there is here a great deal of what is called poetry." Then turning to me, the poet cried, "My muſe has not been long upon the town, and (pointing to the Ode) it trembles under the hand of the great critick." Johnſon in a tone of diſpleaſure aſked him, "Why do you praiſe Anſon?" I did not trouble him by aſking his reaſon for this queſtion. He proceeded, "Here is an errour, Sir; you have made Genius feminine."—"Palpable, Sir; (cried the enthuſiaſt) I know it. But (in a lower tone) it was to pay a compliment to the Ducheſs of Devonſhire, with which her Grace was pleaſed. She is walking acroſs Coxheath, in the military uniform, and I ſuppoſe her to be the Genius of Britain." JOHNSON. "Sir you are giving a reaſon for it, but that will not render it right. You may have a reaſon why two and two ſhould make five; they will ſtill make but four." 1779. Ætat. 70.

Although I was ſeveral times with him in the courſe of the following days, ſuch it ſeems were my occupations, or ſuch my negligence, that I have preſerved no memorial of his converſation till Friday, March 26, when I viſited him. He ſaid he expected to be attacked on account of his "Lives of the Poets." "However (ſaid he) I would rather be attacked than unnoticed.—For the worſt thing you can do to an authour is

to

1779. Ætat. 70. to be ſilent as to his works. An aſſault upon a town is a bad thing; but ſtarving is ſtill worſe; an aſſault may be unſucceſsful; you may have more men killed than you kill; but if you ſtarve the town you are ſure of a victory."

Talking of a friend of our's aſſociating with perſons of very diſcordant principles and characters; I ſaid he was a very univerſal man, quite a man of the world. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; but one may be ſo much a man of the world as to be nothing in the world.——— I remember a paſſage in Goldſmith's 'Vicar of Wakefield,' which he was afterwards fool enough to expunge: 'I do not love a man who is zealous for nothing." BOSWELL. "That was a fine paſſage." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir: there was another fine paſſage too, which he ſtruck out: 'When I was a young man, being anxious to diſtinguiſh myſelf, I was perpetually ſtarting new propoſitions. But I ſoon gave this over; for, I found that generally what was new was falſe." I ſaid I did not like to ſit with people of whom I had not a good opinion. JOHNSON. "But you muſt not indulge your delicacy too much; or you will be a *tête à tête* man all your life."

During my ſtay in London, this ſpring, I find I was unaccountably negligent in preſerving Johnſon's ſayings, more ſo than at any time when I was happy enough to have an opportunity of hearing his wiſdom and wit. There is no help for it now. I muſt content myſelf with preſenting ſuch ſcraps as I have. But I am nevertheleſs aſhamed and vexed to think how much has been loſt. It is not that there was a bad crop this year; but that I was not ſufficiently careful in gathering it in. I, therefore, in ſome inſtances can only exhibit a few detached fragments.

Talking

Talking of the wonderful concealment of the authour of the celebrated letters ſigned *Junius*; he ſaid, "I ſhould have believed Burke to be Junius, becauſe I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing theſe letters; but Burke ſpontaneouſly denied it to me. The caſe would have been different had I aſked him if he was the authour; a man ſo queſtioned, as to an anonymous publication, may think he has a right to deny it. 1779. Ætat. 70.

He obſerved that his old friend, Mr. Sheridan, had been honoured with extraordinary attention in his own country, by having had an exception made in his favour in an Iriſh Act of Parliament concerning inſolvent debtors. "To be thus ſingled out (ſaid he) by a legiſlature, as an object of public conſideration and kindneſs, is a proof of no common merit."

At Streatham, on Monday, March 29, at breakfaſt he maintained that a father had no right to controul the inclinations of his daughters in marriage.

On Wedneſday, March 31, when I viſited him, and confeſſed an exceſs of which I had very ſeldom been guilty; that I had ſpent a whole night in playing at cards, and that I could not look back on it with ſatisfaction. Inſtead of a harſh animadverſion, he mildly ſaid, "Alas, Sir, on how few things can we look back with ſatisfaction."

On Thurſday, April, 1, he commended one of the Dukes of Devonſhire for "a dogged veracity." He ſaid too, "London is nothing to ſome people; but to a man whoſe pleaſure is intellectual, London is the place. And there is no place where œconomy can be ſo well practiſed as in London. More can be had here for the money, even by ladies, than any where elſe.

1779. Ætat. 70. elſe. You cannot play tricks with your fortune in a ſmall place; you muſt make an uniform appearance, Here a lady may have well-furniſhed apartments, and elegant dreſs, without any meat in her kitchen."

I was amuſed by conſidering with how much eaſe and coolneſs he could write or talk to a friend, exhorting him not to ſuppoſe that happineſs was not to be found as well in other places as in London; when he himſelf was at all times ſenſible of its being, comparatively ſpeaking, a heaven upon earth. The truth is, that by thoſe who from ſagacity, attention, and experience, have learnt the full advantage of London, its pre-eminence over every other place, not only for variety of enjoyment, but for comfort, will be felt with a philoſophical exultation. The freedom from remark and petty cenſure, with which life may be paſſed there, is a circumſtance which a man who knows the teizing reſtraint of a narrow circle muſt reliſh highly. Mr. Burke whoſe orderly and amiable domeſtick habits might make the eye of obſervation leſs irkſome to him than to moſt men, ſaid once very pleaſantly, in my hearing, "Though I have the honour to repreſent Briſtol, I ſhould not like to live there; I ſhould be obliged to be ſo much *upon my good behaviour*." In London, a man may live in ſplendid ſociety at one time, and in frugal retirement another, without animadverſion.—There, and there alone, a man's own houſe is truly his *caſtle*, in which he can be in perfect ſafety from intruſion whenever he pleaſes. I never ſhall forget how well this was expreſſed to me one day by Mr. Meynell: "The chief advantage of London (ſaid he) is, that a man is always *ſo near his burrow*."

He ſaid of one of his old acquaintances, "He is very fit for a travelling governour. He knows French

French very well. He is a man of good principles; and there would be no danger that a young gentleman ſhould catch his manner; for it is ſo very bad, that it muſt be avoided. In that reſpect he would be like the drunken Helot." 1779. Ætat. 70.

On Friday, April 2, being Good-Friday, I viſited him in the morning as uſual; and finding that we inſenſibly fell into a train of ridicule upon the foibles of one of our friends, a very worthy man, I, by way of a check, quoted ſome good admonition from "The Government of the Tongue," that very pious book. It happened alſo remarkably enough, that the ſubject of the ſermon preached to us to-day by Dr. Burrows, the rector of St. Clement Danes, upon the certainty that at the laſt day we muſt give an account of "the deeds done in the body;" and, amongſt various acts of culpability he mentioned evil-ſpeaking. As we were moving ſlowly along in the croud from church, Johnſon jogged my elbow, and ſaid, "Did you attend to the ſermon?"—"Yes, Sir, (ſaid I,) it was very applicable to *us*." He, however, ſtood upon the defenſive. "Why, Sir, the ſenſe of ridicule is given us, and may be lawfully uſed. The authour of 'The Government of the Tongue' would have us to treat all men alike."

In the interval between morning and evening ſervice, he endeavoured to employ himſelf earneſtly in devotional exerciſes; and, as he has mentioned in his "Prayers and Meditations*," gave me "*Les Penſees de Paſcal*," that I might not interrupt him. I preſerve the book with reverence. His preſenting it to me is marked upon it with his own hand, and I have found in it a truly divine unction. We went to church again in the afternoon.

On

* Page 173.

1779. Ætat. 70. On Saturday, April 3, I viſited him at night, and found him ſitting in Mrs. Williams's room, with her, and one who he afterwards told me was a natural ſon of the ſecond Lord Southwell. The table had a ſingular appearance, being covered with a heterogenous aſſemblage of oyſters and porter for his company, and tea for himſelf. I mentioned my having heard an eminent phyſician, who was himſelf a chriſtian, argue in favour of univerſal toleration, and maintain, that no man could be hurt by another man's differing from him in opinion. JOHNSON. "Sir, you are to a certain degree hurt by knowing that even one man does not believe."

On Eaſter-day, after ſolemn ſervice at St. Paul's, I dined with him: Mr. Allen the printer was alſo his gueſt. He was uncommonly ſilent; and I have not written down any thing, except a ſingle curious fact, which, having the ſanction of his inflexible veracity, may be received as a ſtriking inſtance of human inſenſibility and inconſideration. As he was paſſing by a fiſhmonger who was ſkinning an eel alive, he heard him "curſe it, becauſe it would not lye ſtill."

On Wedneſday, April 7, I dined with him at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's. I have not marked what company was there. Johnſon harangued upon the qualities of different liquors; and ſpoke with great contempt of claret, as ſo weak, that "a man would be drowned by it before it made him drunk." He was perſuaded to drink one glaſs of it, that he might judge, not from recollection, which might be dim, but from immediate ſenſation. He ſhook his head, and ſaid, "Poor ſtuff. No, Sir, claret is the liquor for boys; port, for men: but he who aſpires to be a hero (ſmiling) muſt drink brandy. In the firſt place, the flavour of brandy is moſt grateful

ful to the palate; and then brandy will do soon- 1779.
eſt for a man what drinking *can* do for him.— Ætat. 70.
There are indeed, few who are able to drink brandy. That is a power rather to be wiſhed for than attained. And yet (proceeded he) as in all pleaſure hope is a conſiderable part, I know not but fruition comes too quick by brandy. Florence wine I think the worſt; it is wine only to the eye; it is wine neither while you are drinking it, nor after you have drunk it; it neither pleaſes the taſte, nor exhilirates the ſpirits." I reminded him how heartily he and I uſed to drink wine together when we were firſt acquainted; and how I uſed to have a head-ache after ſitting up with him. He did not like to have this recalled, or, perhaps, thinking that I boaſted improperly, reſolved to have a witty ſtroke at me: "Nay, Sir, it was not the *wine* which made your head ache, but the *ſenſe* that I put into it." Boswell. "What, Sir? will ſenſe make the head ache?" Johnson. "Yes, Sir, (with a ſmile) when it is not uſed to it." No man who has a true reliſh of pleaſantry could be offended at this; eſpecially if Johnſon in a long intimacy had given him repeated proofs of his regard and good eſtimation. I uſed to ſay, that as he had given me a thouſand pound in praiſe, he had a good right now and then to take a guinea from me.

On Thurſday, April 8, I dined with him at Mr. Allan Ramſay's, with Lord Graham and other company. We talked of Shakſpeare's witches. Johnson. "They are beings of his own creation; they are a compound of malignity and meanneſs, without any abilities; and are quite different from the Italian magician.— King James ſays, in his 'Dæmonology,' 'Magicians command the devils; witches are their

1779. Ætat. 70. ſervants.' The Italian magicians are elegant beings." RAMSAY. "Opera witches, not Drury-lane witches." Johnſon obſerved, that abilities might be employed in a narrow ſphere, as in getting money, which he ſaid he believed no man could do, without vigorous parts, though concentrated to a point. RAMSAY. "Yes, like a ſtrong horſe in a mill: he pulls better."

Lord Graham, while he praiſed the beauty of Lochlomond, on the banks of which is his family ſeat, complained of the climate, and ſaid he could not bear it. JOHNSON. "Nay, my Lord, don't talk ſo: you may bear it well enough. Your anceſtors have borne it more years than I can tell." This was a handſome compliment to the antiquity of the houſe of Montroſe. His Lordſhip told me afterwards, that he had only affected to complain of the climate; leſt, if he had ſpoken as favourably of his country as he really thought, Dr. Johnſon might have attacked it. Johnſon was very courteous to Lady Margaret Macdonald. "Madam, (ſaid he,) when I was in the Iſle of Sky, I heard of the people running to take ſtones off the road, leſt Lady Margaret's horſe ſhould ſtumble."

Lord Graham commended Dr. Drummond at Naples, as a man of extraordinary talents; and added, that he had a great love of liberty.—— JOHNSON. "He is *young*, my Lord; (looking to his Lordſhip with an arch ſmile) all *boys* love liberty, till experience convinces them they are not ſo fit to govern themſelves as they imagined. We are all agreed as to our own liberty; we would have as much of it as we can get; but we are not agreed as to the liberty of others: for in proportion as we take, others muſt loſe.—I believe we hardly wiſh that the mob ſhould have liberty to govern us. When that was the

caſe

caſe ſome time ago, no man was at liberty not to have candles in his windows." RAMSAY.— "The reſult is, that order is better than confuſion." JOHNSON. "The reſult is, that order cannot be had but by ſubordination." 1779. Ætat. 70.

On Friday, April 16, I had been preſent at the trial of the unfortunate Mr. Hackman, who, in a fit of frantick jealous love, had ſhot Miſs Ray, the favourite of a nobleman. Johnſon, in whoſe company I dined to-day, with ſome other friends, was much intereſted by my account of what paſſed, and particularly with his prayer for the mercy of heaven. He ſaid, in a ſolemn fervid tone, "I hope he *ſhall* find mercy."

This day a violent altercation aroſe between Johnſon and Beauclerk, which having made much noiſe at the time, I think it proper, in order to prevent any future miſrepreſentation, to give a minute account of it.

In talking of Hackman, Johnſon argued, as Judge Blackſtone had done, that his being furniſhed with two piſtols was a proof that he meant to ſhoot two perſons. Mr. Beauclerk ſaid, "No; for that every wiſe man who intended to ſhoot himſelf, took two piſtols, that he might be ſure of doing it at once. Lord ——— ———'s cook ſhot himſelf with one piſtol, and lived ten days in great agony. Mr. ———, who loved buttered muffins, but durſt not eat them becauſe they diſagreed with his ſtomach, reſolved to ſhoot himſelf; and then he ate three buttered muffins for breakfaſt, before ſhooting himſelf, knowing that he ſhould not be troubled with indigeſtion: *he* had two charged piſtols; one was found lying charged upon the table by him, after he had ſhot himſelf with the other." "Well, (ſaid Johnſon, with an air of triumph,) you ſee here one piſtol is ſufficient." Beauclerk

1779. Ætat. 70. replied smartly, "Because it happened to kill him." And either then, or a very little afterwards, being piqued at Johnson's triumphant remark, added, "This is what you don't know, and I do." There was then a cessation of the dispute; and some minutes intervened, during which, dinner and the glass went on cheerfully; when Johnson suddenly and abruptly exclaimed, "Mr. Beauclerk, how came you to talk so petulantly to me, as 'This is what you don't know, but what I know?' One thing *I* know which *you* don't seem to know, that you are very uncivil." BEAUCLERK. "Because *you* began by being uncivil, (which you always are)." The words in parenthesis were, I believe, not heard by Dr. Johnson. Here again there was a cessation of arms. Johnson told me, that the reason why he waited some time at first without taking any notice of what Mr. Beauclerk said, was because he was thinking whether he should resent it. But when he considered that there were present a young Lord and an eminent traveller, two men of the world with whom he had never dined before, he was apprehensive that they might think he had a right to take such liberties with him as Beauclerk did, and therefore resolved he would not let it pass; adding, that "he would not appear as a coward." A little while after this, the conversation turned to the violence of Hackman's temper. Johnson then said, "It was his business to *command* his temper, as my friend Mr. Beauclerk should have done some time ago." BEAUCLERK. "I should learn of *you*, Sir."—JOHNSON. "Sir, you have given *me* opportunities enough of learning, when I have been in *your* company. No man loves to be treated with contempt." BEAUCLERK. (with a polite inclination towards Johnson) "Sir, you have known me

me twenty years, and however I may have treated others, you may be ſure I could never treat you with contempt." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have ſaid more than was neceſſary." Thus it ended; and Beauclerk's coach not having come for him till it was very late, Dr. Johnſon and another gentleman ſat with him a long time after the reſt of the company were gone; and he and I dined at Beauclerk's on the Saturday ſe'nnight following. 1779. Ætat. 70.

After this tempeſt had ſubſided, I recollect the following particulars of his converſation:

"I am always for getting a boy forward in his learning; for that is a ſure good. I would let him at firſt read *any* Engliſh book which happens to engage his attention; becauſe you have done a great deal when you have brought him to have entertainment from a book. He'll get better books afterwards."

"Mallet, I believe, never wrote a ſingle line of his projected Life of the Duke of Marlborough. He groped for materials; and thought of it, till he exhauſted his mind. Thus it ſometimes happens that men entangle themſelves in their own ſchemes."

"To be contradicted, in order to force you to talk, is mighty unpleaſing. You *ſhine*, indeed; but it is by being *ground*."

Of a gentleman who made ſome figure among the *Literati* of his time, he ſaid, "What eminence he had was by a felicity of manner: he had no more learning than what he could not help."

On Saturday, April 24, I dined with him at Mr. Beauclerk's, with Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Mr. Jones, (now Sir William,) Mr. Langton, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Paradiſe, and Dr. Higgins. I men-

1779. Ætat. 70. mentioned that a Mr. Wilkes had attached Garrick to me, as a man who had no friend.

JOHNSON. "I believe he is right, Sir. He had friends, but no friend. Garrick was ſo diffuſed, he had no man to whom he wiſhed to unboſom himſelf. He found people always ready to applaud him, and that always for the ſame thing: ſo he ſaw life with great uniformity." I took upon me for once, to fight with Goliath's weapons, and play the ſophiſt.—"Garrick did not need a friend, as he got from every body all he wanted. What is a friend? One who ſupports you and comforts you, while others do not. Friendſhip, you know, Sir, is the cordial drop, 'to make the nauſeous draught of life go down:' but if the draught be not nauſeous, if it be all ſweet, there is no occaſion for that drop."——JOHNSON. "Many men would not be content to live ſo. I hope I ſhould not. They would wiſh to have an intimate friend, with whom they might compare minds, and cheriſh private virtues." One of the company mentioned Lord Cheſterfield, as a man who had no friend——JOHNSON. "There were more materials to make friendſhip in Garrick, had he not been ſo diffuſed." BOSWELL. "Garrick was pure gold, but beat out to thin leaf. Lord Cheſterfield was tinſel." JOHNSON. "Garrick was a very good man, the cheerfulleſt man of his age; a decent liver in a profeſſion which is ſuppoſed to give indulgence to licentiouſneſs; and a man who gave away, freely, money acquired by himſelf. He began the world with a great hunger for money; the ſon of a half-pay officer, bred in a family whoſe ſtudy was to make four-pence do as much as others made four-pence halfpenny do. But, when he had got money, he was very liberal." I preſumed to animadvert on his eulogy on Garrick, in his "Lives of the Poets." "You ſay, Sir,

Sir, his death eclipſed the gaiety of nations."— 1779.
JOHNSON. "I could not have ſaid more nor Ætat. 70.
leſs. It is the truth; *eclipſed*, not *extinguiſhed*; and his death *did* eclipſe; it was like a ſtorm." BOSWELL. "But why nations? Did his gaiety extend farther than his own nation?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, ſome exaggeration muſt be allowed. Beſides, nations may be ſaid if we allow the Scotch to be a nation, and to have gaiety, which they have not. *You* are an exception though. Come, gentlemen, let us candidly admit that there is one Scotchman who is cheerful." BEAUCLERK. "But he is a very unnatural Scotchman." I, however, continued to think the compliment to Garrick hyperbolically untrue. His acting had ceaſed ſome time before his death; at any rate he had acted in Ireland but a ſhort time, at an early period of his life, and never in Scotland. I objected alſo to what appears an anticlymax of praiſe, when contraſted with the preceding panegyrick—"and diminiſhed the publick ſtock of harmleſs pleaſure!"—Is not *harmleſs pleaſure* very tame?" JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, harmleſs pleaſure is the higheſt praiſe. Pleaſure is a word of dubious import; pleaſure is in general dangerous, and pernicious to virtue; to be able therefore to furniſh pleaſure that is harmleſs, pleaſure pure and unalloyed, is as great a power as a man can poſſeſs." This, was, perhaps, as ingenious a defence as could be made; ſtill, however, I was not ſatisfied.

A celebrated wit being mentioned, he ſaid, "One may ſay of him as was ſaid of a French wit, *Il n'a de l'eſprit que contre Dieu.* I have been ſeveral times in company with him, but never perceived any ſtrong power of wit. He produces a general effect by various means; he has a chearful countenance and a gay voice;—

beſides

1779. Ætat. 70. beſides his trade is wit. It would be as wild in him to come into company without merriment, as for a highwayman to take the road without his piſtols."

Talking of the effects of drinking, he ſaid, "Drinking may be practiſed with great prudence; a man who expoſes himſelf when he is intoxicated, has not the art of getting drunk; a ſober man who happens occaſionally to get drunk, readily enough goes into a new company, which a man who has been drinking ſhould never do. Such a man will undertake any thing; he is without ſkill in inebriation. I uſed to ſlink home when I had drunk too much. A man accuſtomed to ſelf-examination will be conſcious when he is drunk, though an habitual drunkard will not be conſcious of it. I knew a phyſician who for twenty years was not ſober; yet in a pamphlet, which he wrote upon fevers, he appealed to Garrick and me for his vindication from a charge of drunkenneſs. A bookſeller (naming him) who got a large fortune by trade, was ſo habitually and equably drunk, that his moſt intimate friends never perceived that he was more ſober at one time than another."

Talking of celebrated and ſucceſsful irregular practiſers in phyſick, he ſaid, "Taylor was the moſt ignorant man I ever knew; but ſprightly. Ward the dulleſt. Taylor challenged me once to talk Latin with him; (laughing). I quoted ſome of Horace, which he took to be part of my own ſpeech. He ſaid a few words well enough." BEAUCLERK. "I remember, Sir, you ſaid that Taylor was an inſtance how far impudence could carry ignorance." Mr. Beauclerk was very entertaining this day, and told us a number of ſhort ſtories in a lively elegant manner, and with that air of *the world* which has

has I know not what impreſſive effect, as if there were ſomething more than is expreſſed, or than perhaps we could perfectly underſtand. As Johnſon and I accompanied Sir Joſhua Reynolds in his coach, Johnſon ſaid, "There is in Beauclerk a predominance over his company, that one does not like. But he is a man who has lived ſo much in the world, that he has a ſhort ſtory on every occaſion; he is always ready to talk and is never exhauſted." 1779. Æt. 70.

Johnſon and I paſſed the evening at Miſs Reynolds's, Sir Joſhua's ſiſter. I mentioned that an eminent friend of our's talking of the common remark, that affection deſcends, ſaid that "this was wiſely contrived for the preſervation of mankind; for which it was not ſo neceſſary that there ſhould be affection from children to parents, as from parents to children; nay there would be no harm in that view though children ſhould at a certain age eat their parents." JOHNSON. "But, Sir, if this were known generally to be the caſe, parents would not have affection for children." BOSWELL. "True, Sir; for it is in expectation of a return that parents are ſo attentive to their children; and I know a very pretty inſtance of a little girl of whom her father was very fond, who once when he was in a melancholy fit, and had gone to bed, perſuaded him to riſe in good-humour, by ſaying, 'My dear papa, pleaſe to get up, and let me help you on with your clothes, that I may learn to do it when you are an old man."

Soon after this time a little incident occurred, which I will not ſuppreſs, becauſe I am deſirous that my work ſhould be, as much as is conſiſtent with the ſtricteſt truth, an antidote to the falſe and injurious notions of his character, which have been given by others, and therefore I infuſe

1779. Ætat. 70. I infuſe every drop of genuine ſweetneſs into my biographical cup.

To Dr. JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I am in great pain with an inflamed foot, and obliged to keep my bed, ſo am prevented from having the pleaſure to dine at Mr. Ramſay's to-day, which is very hard; and my ſpirits are ſadly ſunk. Will you be ſo friendly as to come and ſit an hour with me in the evening. I am ever

"Your moſt faithful,

"And affectionate humble ſervant,

"South Audley-ſtreet, Monday, April 26. JAMES BOSWELL."

To Mr. BOSWELL.

"MR. JOHNSON laments the abſence of Mr. Boſwell, and will come to him."

"Harley-ſtreet."

He came to me in the evening, and brought Sir Joſhua Reynolds along with him. I need ſcarcely ſay, that their converſation, while they ſate by my bed-ſide, was the moſt pleaſing opiate to pain that could have been adminiſtered.

Johnſon being now better diſpoſed to obtain information concerning Pope than he was laſt year, ſent by me to my Lord Marchmont, a preſent of thoſe volumes of his "Lives of the Poets," which were at this time publiſhed, with a requeſt to have permiſſion to wait on him, and his Lordſhip, who had called on him twice, obligingly appointed Saturday, the firſt of May, for receiving us.

On

On that morning Johnſon came to me from Streatham, and after drinking chocolate, at General Paoli's, in South-Audley-ſtreet, we proceeded to Lord Marchmont's, in Curzon-ſtreet. His Lordſhip met us at the door of his library, and with great politeneſs ſaid to Johnſon, "I am not going to make an encomium upon *myſelf*, by telling you the high reſpect I have for *you*, Sir." Johnſon was exceedingly courteous, and the interview, which laſted about two hours, during which the Earl communicated his anecdotes of Pope, was as agreeable as I could have wiſhed. When we came out, I ſaid to Johnſon, that conſidering his Lordſhip's civility, I ſhould have been vexed if he had again failed to come. "Sir (ſaid he) I would rather have given twenty pounds than not have come." I accompanied him to Streatham, where we dined and returned to town in the evening. 1779. Ætat. 70.

On Monday, May 3, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's; I preſſed him this day for his opinion on the paſſage in Parnell, concerning which I had in vain queſtioned him in ſeveral letters, and at length obtained it in *due form of law*;

CASE for Dr. JOHNSON's Opinion; 3d of May, 1779.

"PARNELL, in his 'Hermit,' has the following paſſage:

'To clear this doubt, to know the world by ſight,
'To find if *books* and *ſwains* report it right:
'(For yet by *ſwains alone* the world he knew,
'Whoſe feet came wandering o'er the nightly dew).'

Is there not a contradiction in its being *firſt* ſuppoſed that the Hermit knew *both* what books and ſwains

1779. Æt. 70. ſwains reported of the world; yet *afterwards* ſaid, that he knew it by ſwains *alone?*

"*I think it an inaccuracy.—He mentions two inſtructors in the firſt line, and ſays he had only one in the next.*"

This evening I ſet out for Scotland.

To Mrs. LUCY PORTER, *in Lichfield.*

"DEAR MADAM,

"MR. GREEN has informed me that you are much better; I hope I need not tell you that I am glad of it. I cannot boaſt of being much better; my old nocturnal complaint ſtill purſues me, and my reſpiration is difficult, tho' much eaſier than when I left you the ſummer before laſt. Mr. and Mrs. Thrale are well; Miſs has been a little indiſpoſed; but ſhe is got well again. They have ſince the loſs of their boy had two daughters; but they ſeem likely to want a ſon.

"I hope you had ſome books which I ſent you. I was ſorry for poor Mrs. Adey's death, and am afraid you will be ſometimes ſolitary; but endeavour, whether alone or in company, to keep yourſelf cheerful. My friends likewiſe die very faſt; but ſuch is the ſtate of man. I am, dear love,

"Your moſt humble ſervant

May 4, 1779. SAM. JOHNSON."

He had, before I left London, reſumed the converſation concerning the appearance of a ghoſt at Newcaſtle upon Tyne, which Mr. John Weſley believed, but to which Johnſon did not give credit. I was, however, deſirous to examine the queſtion cloſely, and at the ſame time wiſhed

wiſhed to be made acquainted with Mr. John Weſley; for though I differed from him in ſome points, I admired his various talents, and loved his pious zeal. At my requeſt, therefore, Dr. Johnſon gave me a letter of introduction to him. 1779. Æat 70.

To the Reverend Mr. JOHN WESLEY.

"SIR,

"MR. BOSWELL, a gentleman who has been long known to me, is deſirous of being known to you, and has aſked this recommendation, which I give him with great willingneſs, becauſe I think it very much to be wiſhed that worthy and religious men ſhould be acquainted with each other. I am, Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"May 3, 1779. SAM. JOHNSON.

Mr. Weſley being in the courſe of his miniſtry at Edinburgh, I preſented this letter to him, and was very politely received. I begged to have it returned to me, which was accordingly done. His ſtate of the evidence as to the ghoſt, did not ſatisfy me.

I did not write to Johnſon, as uſual, upon my return to my family; but tried how he would be affected by my ſilence. Mr. Dilly ſent me a a copy of a note which he received from him on the 13th of July, in theſe words:

To Mr. DILLY.

"SIR,

"SINCE Mr. Boſwell's departure I have never heard from him; pleaſe to ſend word what you know of him, and whether you have ſent my books to his lady. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

My

1779. Ætat. 70. My readers will not doubt that his ſolicitude about me was very flattering.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"WHAT can poſſibly have happened, that keeps us two ſuch ſtrangers to each other? I expected to have heard from you when you came home; I expected afterwards. I went into the country, and returned; and yet there is no letter from Mr. Boſwell. No ill I hope has happened; and if ill ſhould happen, why ſhould it be concealed from him who loves you? Is it a fit of humour, that has diſpoſed you to try who can hold out the longeſt without writing? if it be, you have the victory. But I am afraid of ſomething bad; ſet me free from my ſuſpicions.

"My thoughts are at preſent employed in gueſſing the reaſon of your ſilence: you muſt not expect that I ſhould tell you any thing, if I had any thing to tell. Write, pray write to me, and let me know what is, or what has been the cauſe of this long interruption. I am, dear Sir,

"Your moſt affectionate humble ſervant,

"July 13, 1779. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, July 17, 1779.

"WHAT may be juſtly denominated a ſupine indolence of mind has been my ſtate of exiſtence ſince I laſt returned to Scotland. In a livelier ſtate I had often ſuffered ſeverely from long intervals of ſilence on your part; and I had even been chid by you for expreſſing my uneaſineſs. I was willing to take advantage of my inſenſibility,

insensibility, and while I could bear the experiment, to try whether your affection for me, would, after an unusual silence on my part, make you write first. This afternoon I have had very high satisfaction by receiving your kind letter of inquiry, for which I most gratefully thank you. I am doubtful if it was right to make the experiment; though I have gained by it. I was beginning to grow tender, and to upbraid myself, especially after having dreamt two nights ago that I was with you. I and my wife, and my four children, are well. I would not delay one post to answer your letter; but as it is late, I have not time to do more. You shall soon hear from me, upon many and various particulars; and I shall never again put you to any test. I ever am, with veneration, my dear Sir, Your much obliged

"And faithful humble servant,

JAMES BOSWELL."

1779. Ætat. 70.

On the 22d of July, I wrote to him again; and gave him an account of my last interview with my worthy friend Mr. Edw. Dilly, at his brother's house at Southill, in Bedfordshire, where he died soon after I parted him, leaving me a very kind remembrance of his regard.

I informed him that Lord Hailes, who had promised to furnish him with some anecdotes for his "Lives of the Poets," had sent me three instances of Prior's borrowing from *Gombauld*, in "*Recueil des Poetes*," tome 3. Epigram "To John I owed, 'great obligation,'" p. 25. "To the Duke of Noailles," p. 32. "Sauntering Jack and idle Joan," p. 25.

My letter was a pretty long one, and contained a variety of particulars; but he, it would seem had not attended to it; for his next to me was as follows:

To

1779. *To* JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

Æt. 70. "MY DEAR SIR,

"ARE you playing the same trick again, and trying who can keep silence longest? Remember that all tricks are either knavish or childish; and that it is as foolish to make experiments upon the constancy of a friend, as upon the chastity of a wife.

"What can be the cause of this second fit of silence, I cannot conjecture; but after one trick, I will not be cheated by another, nor will harrass my thoughts with conjectures about the motives of a man who, probably acts only by caprice. I therefore suppose you are well, and that Mrs. Boswell is well too: and that the fine summer has restored Lord Auchinleck. I am much better than you left me; I think I am better than when I was in Scotland.

"I forgot whether I informed you that poor Thrale has been in great danger. Mrs. Thrale likewise has miscarried, and been much indisposed. Every body else is well; Langton is in camp. I intend to put Lord Hailes's description of Dryden* into another edition, and as I know his accuracy, wish he would consider the dates, which I could not always settle to my own mind.

"Mr. Thrale goes to Brighthelmston, about Michaelmas, to be jolly and ride a hunting. I shall go to town, or perhaps to Oxford. Exercise and gaiety, or rather carelessness, will, I hope, dissipate all remains of his malady; and I likewise hope by the change of place, to find

* Which I communicated to him from his Lordship, but it has not yet been published. I have a copy of it.

some

ſome opportunities of growing yet better myſelf. 1779.
I am, dear Sir, Ætat. 70.

" Your humble ſervant.

" Streatham, Sept. 9, 1779. SAM. JOHNSON."

My readers will not be diſpleaſed at being told every ſlight circumſtance of the manner in which Dr. Johnſon contrived to amuſe his ſolitary hours. He ſometimes employed himſelf in chymiſtry, ſometimes in watering and pruning a vine, and ſometimes in ſmall experiments, at which thoſe who may ſmile, ſhould recollect that there are moments which admit of being ſoothed only by trifles.*

On the 20th of September I defended myſelf againſt his ſuſpicion of me, which I did not deſerve; and I added, " Pray let us write frequently. A whim ſtrikes me, that we ſhould each ſend off a ſheet once a week, like a ſtage-coach, whether it be full or not; nay, though it ſhould be empty. The very ſight of your hand-writing would comfort me; and were a ſheet to be thus ſent regularly, we ſhould much oftener convey ſomething, were it only a few kind words."

*In one of his manuſcript diaries, there is the following entry, which marks his curious minute attention: " Aug. 7, 1779. *Partem brachii dextri carpo proximam et cutem pectoris circa maxillam dextram raſi, ut notum fieret quanto temporis, pili renovarentur.*"

Another of the ſame kind appears, " July 26, 1768. I ſhaved my nail by accident in whetting the knife, about an eighth of an inch from the bottom, and about a fourth from the top. This I meaſure that I may know the growth of nails; the whole is about five eighths of an inch."

And, " Aug. 15, 1783. I cut from the vine 41 leaves, which weighed five oz. and a half, and eight ſcruples:—I lay them upon my book-caſe to ſee what weight they will loſe by drying."

1779. Ætat. 70. My friend Colonel James Stuart, ſecond ſon of the earl of Bute, who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf as a good officer of the Bedfordſhire militia, had taken a publick-ſpirited reſolution to ſerve his country in its difficulties, by raiſing a regular regiment, and taking the command of it himſelf. This, in the heir of the immenſe property of Wortley, was highly honourable. Having been in Scotland recruiting, he obligingly aſked me to accompany him to Leeds, then the head-quarters of his corps; from thence to London for a ſhort time, and afterwards to other places to which the regiment might be ordered. Such an offer, at a time of the year when I had full leiſure, was very pleaſing; eſpecially as I was to accompany a man of ſterling good ſenſe, information, diſcernment, and conviviality; and was to have a ſecond crop, in one year, of London and Johnſon. Of this I informed my illuſtrious friend, in characteriſtical warm terms, in a letter dated the 30th of September, from Leeds.

On Monday, October 4, I called at his houſe before he was up. He ſent for me to his bedſide, and expreſſed his ſatisfaction at this incidental meeting, with as much vivacity as if he had been in the gaiety of youth. He called briſkly, "Frank, go and get coffee, and let us breakfaſt in ſplendour."

During this viſit to London I had ſeveral interviews with him, which it is unneceſſary to diſtinguiſh particularly. I conſulted him as to the appointment of guardians to my children, in caſe of my death. "Sir, (ſaid he) do not appoint a number of guardians. When they are many, they truſt one to another, and the buſineſs is neglected. I would adviſe you to chooſe only one; let him be a man of reſpectable character,

racter, who, for his own credit, will do what is right; let him be a rich man, ſo that he may be under no temptation to take advantage; and let him be a man of buſineſs, who is uſed to conduct affairs with ability and expertneſs, to whom, therefore, the execution of the truſt will not be burthenſome." 1779. Ætat. 70.

On Sunday, October 10, we dined together at Mr. Strahan's. The converſation having turned on the prevailing practice of going to the Eaſt-Indies in queſt of wealth;—JOHNSON. "A man had better have ten thouſand pounds at the end of ten years paſſed in England, than twenty thouſand pounds at the end of ten years paſſed in India, becauſe you muſt compute what you *give* for money; and a man who has lived ten years in India, has given up ten years of ſocial comfort and all thoſe advantages which ariſe from living in England. The ingenious Mr. Brown, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Capability Brown*, told me, that he was once at the ſeat of Lord Clive, who had returned from India with great wealth; and that he ſhewed him at the door of his bedchamber a large cheſt, which he ſaid he had once full of gold; upon which Brown obſerved, "I am glad you can bear it ſo near your bedchamber."

We talked of the ſtate of the poor in London.—JOHNSON. "Saunders Welch, the juſtice, who was once high-conſtable of Holborn, and had the beſt opportunities of knowing the ſtate of the poor, told me, that I under-rated the number, when I computed that twenty a week, that is, above a thouſand a year, died of hunger; not abſolutely of immediate hunger, but of the waſting and other diſeaſes which are the conſequences of hunger. This happens only in ſo large a place as London, where people are not known. What we are told about the

1779. great ſums got by begging is not true: the trade is overſtocked. And, you may depend upon it, there are many who cannot get work. A particular kind of manufacture fails. Thoſe who have been uſed to work at it can, for ſome time, work at nothing elſe. You meet a man begging; you charge him with idleneſs: he ſays, 'I am willing to labour. Will you give me work?—'I cannot.'—'Why then you have no right to charge me with idleneſs."

Ætat. 70.

We left Mr. Strahan's at ſeven, as Johnſon had ſaid he intended to go to evening prayers. As we walked along, he complained of a little gout in his toe, and ſaid, "I ſhan't go to prayers to-night; I ſhall go to-morrow. Whenever I miſs church on a Sunday, I reſolve to go another day. But I do not always do it." This was a fair exhibition of that vibration between pious reſolutions and indolence, which many of us have too often experienced.

I went home with him, and we had a long quiet converſation.

I read him a letter from Dr. Hugh Blair, concerning Pope, (in writing whoſe life he was now employed,) which I ſhall inſert as a literary curioſity.*

* The Reverend Dr. Law, Biſhop of Carliſle, in the Preface to his valuable edition of Archbiſhop King's "Eſſay on the Origin of Evil," mentions that the principles maintained in it had been adopted by Pope in his "Eſſay on Man;" and adds, "The fact, notwithſtanding ſuch denial, (Biſhop Warburton's,) might have been ſtrictly verified by an unexceptionable teſtimony, *viz.* that of the late Lord Bathurſt, who ſaw the very ſame ſyſtem of the τοξιλτιον (taken from the Archbiſhop) in Lord Bolingbroke's own hand, lying before Mr. Pope, while he was compoſing his Eſſay." This is reſpectable evidence; but that of Dr. Blair is more direct from the fountain-head, as well as more full.

To

1779.
Ætat. 70.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"IN the year 1763, being at London, I was carried by Dr. John Blair, prebendary of Weſtminſter, to dine at old Lord Bathurſt's; where we found the late Mr. Mallet, Sir James Porter, who had been ambaſſadour at Conſtantinople, the late Dr. Macaulay, and two or three more. The converſation turning on Mr. Pope, lord Bathurſt told us, that 'The Eſſay on Man' was originally compoſed by lord Bolingbroke in proſe, and that Mr. Pope did no more than put it into verſe: that he had read lord Bolingbroke's manuſcript in his own hand-writing; and remembered well that he was at a loſs whether moſt to admire the elegance of lord Bolingbroke's proſe, or the beauty of Mr. Pope's verſe. When lord Bathurſt told this, Mr. Mallet bade me attend, and remember this remarkable piece of information; as by the courſe of nature, I might ſurvive his lordſhip, and be a witneſs of his having ſaid ſo. The converſation was indeed too remarkable to be forgotten. A few days after, meeting with you, who were then alſo at London, you will remember that I mentioned to you what had paſſed on this ſubject, as I was much ſtruck with this anecdote. But what aſcertains my recollection of it beyond doubt, is, that being accuſtomed to keep a journal of what paſſed when I was at London, which I wrote out every evening, I find the particulars of the above information, juſt as I have now given them, diſtinctly marked; and am thence enabled to fix this converſation to have paſſed on Friday the 22d of April, 1763

"I re-

1779. Ætat. 70. "I remember alſo diſtinctly, though I have not for this the authority of my journal,) that the converſation going on concerning Mr. Pope, I took notice of a report which had been ſometimes propagated that he did not underſtand Greek. Lord Bathurſt ſaid to me, that he knew that to be falſe; for that part of the Iliad was tranſlated by Mr. Pope in his houſe in the country; and that in the mornings, when they aſſembled at breakfaſt, Mr. Pope uſed frequently to repeat, with great rapture, the Greek lines which he had been tranſlating, and then to give them his verſion of them, and to compare them together.

"If theſe circumſtances can be of any uſe to Dr. Johnſon, you have my full liberty to give them to him. I beg you will, at the ſame time, preſent to him my moſt reſpectful compliments, with beſt wiſhes for his ſucceſs and fame in all his literary undertakings. I am, with great reſpect, my deareſt Sir,

"Your moſt affectionate

"And obliged humble ſervant,

"Broughton-Park, Sept. 21, 1779. HUGH BLAIR."

JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, this is too ſtrongly ſtated. Pope may have had from Bolingbroke the philoſophick ſtamina of his eſſay: and admitting this to be true, lord Bathurſt did not intentionally falſify. But the thing is not true in the latitude that Blair ſeems to imagine; we are ſure that the poetical imagery, which makes a great part of the poem, was Pope's own. It is amazing, Sir, what deviations there are from preciſe truth, in the account which is given of almoſt every thing. I told Mrs. Thrale, 'You have ſo little anxiety about truth, that

that you never tax your memory with the exact thing.' Now what is the uſe of the memory to truth, if one is careleſs of exactneſs? Lord Hailes's 'Annals of Scotland' are very exact; but they contain mere dry particulars. They are to be conſidered as a dictionary. You know ſuch things are there; and may be looked at when you pleaſe. Robertſon paints; but the misfortune is, you are ſure he does not know the people whom he paints: ſo you cannot ſuppoſe a likeneſs. Characters ſhould never be given by an hiſtorian unleſs he knew the people whom he deſcribes, or copies from thoſe who knew them." 1779. Ætat. 70.

Boswell. "Why Sir, do people play this trick which I obſerve now, when I look at your grate, putting the ſhovel againſt it to make the fire burn?" Johnson. "They play the trick, but it does not make the fire burn. *There* is a better (ſetting the poker perpendicularly up at right angles with the grate.) In days of ſuperſtition they thought, as it made a croſs with the bars, it would drive away the witch."

Boswell. "By aſſociating with you, Sir, I am always getting an acceſſion of wiſdom. But perhaps a man, after knowing his own character —the limited ſtrength of his own mind, ſhould not be deſirous of having too much wiſdom, conſidering, *quid valeant humeri*, how little he can carry." Johnson. "Sir, be as wiſe as you can; let a man be *aliis lætus, ſapiens ſibi*:

'Though pleas'd to ſee the dolphins play,
'I mind my compaſs and my way.'

You may be wiſe in your ſtudy in the morning, and gay in company at a tavern in the evening. Every man is to take care of his own wiſdom and

1779. Ætat. 70. and his own virtue, without minding too much what others think."

He ſaid, "Dodſley firſt mentioned to me the ſcheme of an Engliſh Dictionary; but I had long thought of it." BOSWELL. "You did not know what you was undertaking." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, I knew very well what I was undertaking—and very well how to do it, and have done it very well." BOSWELL. "An excellent climax! and it *has* availed you. In your preface you ſay, 'What would it avail me in this gloom of ſolitude?' You have been agreeably miſtaken."

In his life of Milton he obſerves, "I cannot but remark a kind of reſpect, perhaps unconſciouſly, paid to this great man by his biographers: every houſe in which he reſided is hiſtorically mentioned, as if it were an injury to neglect naming any place that he honoured by his preſence." I had, before I read this obſervation, been deſirous of ſhewing that reſpect to Johnſon, by various inquiries. Finding him this evening in a very good humour, I prevailed on him to give me an exact liſt of his places of reſidence, ſince he entered the metropolis as an authour, which I ſubjoin in a note.*

I mentioned to him a diſpute between a friend of mine and his lady, concerning conjugal infidelity, which my friend had maintained was by no means ſo bad in the huſband, as in the wife.

* 1. Exeter-ſtreet, off Catherine-ſtreet, Strand.
2. Greenwich.
3. Woodſtock-ſtreet, near Hanover-ſquare.
4. Caſtle-ſtreet, Cavendiſh-ſquare.
5. Strand.
6. Boſwell-Court.
7. Strand, again.
8. Bow-ſtreet.
9. Holborn.

JOHNSON.

JOHNSON. "Your friend was in the right, Sir. Between a man and his Maker it is a different queſtion; but between a man and his wife, a huſband's infidelity is nothing. They are connected by children, by fortune, by ſerious conſiderations of community. Wiſe married women don't trouble themſelves about infidelity in their huſbands. BOSWELL. "To be ſure there is a great difference between the offence of infidelity in a man and that of his wife." JOHNSON. "The difference is boundleſs. The man impoſes no baſtards upon his wife." 1779. Ætat. 70.

Here it may be queſtioned whether Johnſon was entirely in the right. I ſuppoſe it will not be controverted that the difference in the degree of criminality is very great, on account of conſequences: but ſtill it may be maintained, that independent of moral obligation, infidelity is by no means a light offence in a huſband; becauſe it muſt hurt a delicate attachment, in which a mutual conſtancy is implied, with ſuch refined ſentiments as Maſſinger has exhibited in his play of "The Picture." Johnſon probably at another time would have admitted this opinion. And let it be kept in remembrance, that he was very careful not to give any encouragement to irregular conduct. A gentleman, not adverting to the diſtinction made by him upon this ſubject, ſuppoſed a caſe of ſingular perverſeneſs in a wife, and heedleſsly ſaid, "That

10. Fetter-lane.
11. Holborn, again.
12. Gough-ſquare.
13. Staple-Inn.
14. Gray's-Inn.
15. Inner Temple-Inn, No. 1.
16. Johnſon's-court, No. 7.
17. Bolt-court, No. 8.

then

1779. Ætat. 70. then he thought a husband might do as he pleased with a safe conscience." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, this is wild indeed (smiling); you must consider that fornication is a crime in a single man; and you cannot have more liberty by being married."

He this evening expressed himself strongly against the Roman Catholicks; observing, "In every thing which they differ from us they are wrong." He was even against the invocation of saints; in short, he was in the humour of opposition.

Having regretted to him that I had learnt little Greek, as is too generally the case in Scotland, that I had for a long time hardly applied at all to the study of that noble language, and that I was desirous of being told by him what method to follow; he recommended to me as easy helps, Sylvanus's "First Book of the Iliad;" Dawson's "Lexicon to the Greek New Testament; and "Hesiod," with *Pasoris Lexicon* at the end of it."

On Tuesday, October 12, I dined with him at Mr. Ramsay's, with Lord Newhaven, and some other company, none of whom I recollect but a beautiful Miss Graham, a relation of his Lordship's, who asked Dr. Johnson to hob or nob with her. He was flattered by such pleasing attention, and politely told her, he never drank wine; but if she would drink a glass of water, he was much at her service. She accepted. "Oho, Sir! (said Lord Newhaven) you are caught." JOHNSON. "Nay, I do not see *how* I am *caught*; but if I am caught I don't want to get free again. If I am caught, I hope to be kept." Then when the two glasses of water were brought, smiling placidly to the young lady, "Madam, let us *reciprocate*."

Lord

Lord Newhaven and Johnſon carried on an argument for ſome time, concerning the Middleſex election. Johnſon ſaid, "Parliament may be conſidered as bound by law, as a man is bound where there is nobody to tie the knot. As it is clear that the Houſe of Commons may expel, and expel again and again, why not allow of the power to incapacitate for that parliament, rather than have a perpetual conteſt kept up between parliament and the people." Lord Newhaven took the oppoſite ſide, but reſpectfully ſaid, "I ſpeak with great deference to you, Dr. Johnſon, I ſpeak to be inſtructed." This had its full effect upon my friend. He bowed his head almoſt as low as the table, to a complimenting nobleman; and called out, "My Lord, my Lord, I do not deſire all this ceremony; let us tell our minds to one another quietly." After the debate was over, he ſaid, "I have got lights on the ſubject to day, which I had not before." This was a great deal from him, eſpecially as he had written a pamphlet upon it. 1779. Ætat. 70.

He obſerved, "The Houſe of Commons was originally not a privilege of the people, but a check for the Crown on the Houſe of Lords. I remember Henry the Eighth, wanted them to do ſomething; they heſitated in the morning, but did it in the afternoon. He told them, 'It is well you did, or half your heads ſhould have been upon Temple-bar.' But the Houſe of Commons is now no longer under the power of the Crown, and therefore muſt be bribed." He added, "I have no delight in talking of public affairs."

Of his fellow-collegian, the celebrated Mr. George Whitefield, he ſaid, "Whitefield never drew as much attention as a mountebank does; he

1779. Ætat. 70. he did not draw attention by doing better than others, but by doing what was ſtrange. Were Aſtley to preach a ſermon ſtanding upon his head on a horſe's back, he would collect a multitude to hear him; but no wiſe man would ſay he had made a better ſermon for that. I never treated Whitefield's miniſtry with contempt; I believe he did good. He had devoted himſelf to the lower claſſes of mankind, and among them he was of uſe. But when familiarity and noiſe claim the praiſe due to knowledge, art, and elegance, we muſt beat down ſuch pretenſions."

What I have preſerved of his converſation during the remainder of my ſtay in London at this time, is only what follows: I told him that when I objected to keep company with a notorious infidel, a celebrated friend of our's ſaid to me, "I do not think that men who live laxly in the world, as you and I do, can with propriety aſſume ſuch an authority. Dr. Johnſon may, who is uniformly exemplary in his conduct. But it is not very conſiſtent to ſhun an infidel to day, and get drunk to-morrow." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, this is ſad reaſoning. Becauſe a man cannot be right in all things, he is to be right in nothing? Becauſe a man ſometimes gets drunk, is he therefore to ſteal? This doctrine would ſoon bring a man to the gallows.

"After all, however, it is a difficult queſtion how far ſincere Chriſtians ſhould aſſociate with the avowed enemies of religion; for in the firſt place, almoſt every man's mind may be more or leſs corrupted by evil communications;' ſecondly, the world may very naturally ſuppoſe that they are not really in earneſt in religion, who can eaſily bear its opponents; and thirdly, if

if the profane find themſelves quite well received by the pious, one of the checks upon an open declaration of their infidelity, and one of the probable chances of obliging them to reflect, which their being ſhunned would do, is removed." 1779. Ætat. 70.

He, I know not why, ſhewed upon all occaſions an averſion to go to Ireland, where I propoſed to him that we ſhould make a tour. JOHNSON. "It is the laſt place where I would wiſh to travel." BOSWELL. "Should you not like to ſee Dublin, Sir?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir, Dublin is only a worſe capital." BOSWELL. "Is not the Giant's-Cauſeway worth ſeeing?" JOHNSON. "Worth ſeeing, yes; but not worth going to ſee."

Of an acquaintance of ours, whoſe manners and every thing about him, though expenſive, were coarſe, he ſaid, "Sir, you ſee in him vulgar proſperity."

A foreign miniſter, of no very high talents, who had been in his company for a conſiderable time quite overlooked, happened luckily to mention that he had read ſome of his "*Rambler*" in Italian, and admired it much. This pleaſed him greatly; he obſerved, that the title had been tranſlated, *Il Genio errante*, though I have been told it was rendered more ludicrouſly, *Il vagabondo*: and finding that this miniſter gave ſuch a proof of his taſte, he was all attention to him, and on the firſt remark which he made, however ſimple, exclaimed, "The Ambaſſadour ſays well—His Excellency obſerves"—And then he expanded and enriched the little that had been ſaid in ſo ſtrong a manner, that it appeared ſomething of conſequence. This was exceedingly entertaining to the company who were preſent, and many a time afterwards it furniſhed a pleaſant

1779. Ætat. 70. ſant topic of merriment: "*The Ambaſſadour ſays well,*" became a laughable term of applauſe, when no mighty matter had been expreſſed.

I left London, on Monday, October 18, and accompanied Colonel Stuart to Cheſter, where his regiment was to lye for ſome time.

Mr. BOSWELL *to Dr.* JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR, Cheſter, 22 Oct. 1779.

"IT was not till one o'clock on Monday morning, that Colonel Stuart and I left London; for we choſe to bid a cordial adieu to Lord Mountſtuart, who was to ſet out that day on his embaſſy to Turin. We drove on excellently, and reached Litchfield in good time enough that night. The Colonel had heard ſo preferable a character of the George, that he would not put up at the Three Crowns, ſo that I did not ſee our hoſt Wilkins. We found at the George as good accommodation as we could wiſh to have, and I fully enjoyed the comfortable thought that *I was in Litchfield again.* Next morning it rained very hard; and as I had much to do in a little time, I ordered a poſt-chaiſe, and between eight and nine ſallied forth to make a round of viſits. I firſt went to Mr. Green, hoping to have had him to accompany me to all my other friends, but he was engaged to attend the Biſhop of Sodor and Man, who was then lying at Litchfield very ill of the gout. Having taken a haſty glance at the additions to Green's muſeum, from which it was not eaſy to break away, I next went to the Friery, where I at firſt occaſioned ſome tumult in the ladies, who were not prepared to receive *company* ſo early; but my *name,* which has by wonderful felicity come to be ſo cloſely aſſociated with yours, ſoon made all eaſy;

eaſy; and Mrs. Cobb and Miſs Adye re-aſſumed their ſeats at the breakfaſt-table, which they had quitted with ſome precipitation. They received me with the kindneſs of old acquaintance; and after we had joined in a cordial chorus to *your* praiſe, Mrs. Cobb gave *me* the high ſatisfaction of hearing that you ſaid, 'Boſwell is a man who I believe never left a houſe without leaving a wiſh for his return.' And ſhe afterwards added, that ſhe bid you tell me, that if ever I came to Litchfield, ſhe hoped I would take a bed at the Friery. From thence I drove to Peter Garrick's, where I alſo found a flattering welcome. He appeared to me to enjoy his uſual chearfulneſs; and he very kindly aſked me to come when I could, and paſs a week with him. From Mr. Garrick's I went to the Palace to wait on Mr. Seward. I was firſt entertained by his lady and daughter, he himſelf being in bed with a cold, according to his valetudinary cuſtom. But he deſired to ſee me; and I found him dreſt in his black gown, with a white flannel night-gown above it; ſo that he looked like a Dominican friar. He was good-humoured and polite; and under his roof too my reception was very pleaſing. I then proceeded to Stowhill, and firſt paid my reſpects to Mrs. Gaſtrell, whoſe converſation I was not willing to quit. But my ſand-glaſs was now beginning to run low, as I could not treſpaſs too long on the Colonel's kindneſs, who obligingly waited for me; ſo I haſtened to Mrs. Aſton's, whom I found much better than I feared I ſhould; and there I met a brother-in-law of theſe ladies, who talked much of you, and very well too, as it appeared to me. It only then remained to viſit Mrs. Lucy Porter, which I did, I really believe, with ſincere ſatisfaction on both ſides. I am ſure

1779. Ætat. 70.

1779. Ætat. 70. ſure I was glad to ſee her again; and as I take her to be very honeſt, I truſt ſhe was glad to ſee me again; for ſhe expreſſed herſelf ſo, that I could not doubt of her being in earneſt. What a great key-ſtone of kindneſs, my dear Sir, was you that morning! for we were all held together by our common attachment to you. I cannot ſay that I ever paſſed two hours with more ſelf-complacency than I did thoſe two at Litchfield. Let me not entertain any ſuſpicion that this is idle vanity. Will not you confirm me in my perſuaſion, that he who finds himſelf ſo regarded has juſt reaſon to be happy?

"We got to Cheſter about midnight on Tueſday, and here again I am in a ſtate of much enjoyment. Colonel Stuart and his officers treat me with all the civility I could wiſh; and I play my part admirably. *Lætus aliis, ſapiens ſibi*, the claſſical ſentence which you, I imagine, invented the other day, is exemplified in my preſent exiſtence. The Biſhop, to whom I had the honour to be known ſeveral years ago, ſhews me much attention; and I am edified by his converſation. I muſt not omit to tell you, that his Lordſhip admires, very highly, your Prefaces to the Poets. I am daily obtaining an extenſion of agreeable acquaintance, ſo that I am kept in animated variety; and the ſtudy of the place itſelf, by the aſſiſtance of books and the Biſhop, is ſufficient occupation. Cheſter pleaſes my fancy more than any town I ever ſaw. But I will not enter upon it at all in this letter.

"How long I ſhall ſtay here I cannot well ſay. I told a very pleaſing young lady, niece to one of the Prebendaries, at whoſe houſe I ſaw her, 'I have come to Cheſter, Madam, I cannot tell how; and far leſs can I tell how I am to get away from it.' Do not think me too juvenile.

nile. I beg it of you, my dear Sir, to favour me with a letter while I am here, and add to the happineſs of a happy friend, who is ever, with affectionate veneration, 1779. Ætat. 70.

"Moſt ſincerely yours,

"JAMES BOSWELL.

"If you do not write directly, ſo as to catch me here, I ſhall be diſappointed. Two lines from you will keep my lamp burning bright."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"WHY ſhould you importune me ſo earneſtly to write? Of what importance can it be to hear of diſtant friends, to a man who finds himſelf welcome wherever he goes, and make new friends faſter than he can want them? If, to the delight of ſuch univerſal kindneſs of reception, any thing can be added by knowing that you retain my good-will, you may indulge yourſelf in the full enjoyment of that ſmall addition.

"I am glad that you made the round of Litchfield with ſo much ſucceſs: the oftener you are ſeen, the more you will be liked. It was pleaſing to me to read that Mrs. Aſton was ſo well; and that Lucy Porter was ſo glad to ſee you.

"In the place where you now are, there is much to be obſerved; and you will eaſily procure yourſelf ſkilful directors. But what will you do to keep away the *black dog* that worries you at home? If you would, in compliance with your father's advice, enquire into the old tenures, and old charters of Scotland, you would certainly open to yourſelf many ſtriking ſcenes of the manners of the middle ages. The feudal ſyſtem, in a country half barbarous, is naturally productive of great anomalies in civil life. The

1779. Ætat. 70. knowledge of paſt times is naturally growing leſs in all caſes not of public record; and the paſt time of Scotland is ſo unlike the preſent, that it is already difficult for a Scotchman to image the œconomy of his grand-father. Do not be tardy, nor negligent; but gather up eagerly what can yet be found*.

"We have, I think, once talked of another project, a hiſtory of the late inſurrection in Scotland, with all its incidents. Many falſehoods are paſſing into uncontradicted hiſtory. Voltaire, who loved a ſtriking ſtory, has told what we could not find to be true.

"You may make collections for either of theſe projects, or for both, as opportunities occur, and digeſt your materials at leiſure. The great direction which Burton has left to men diſordered like you, *Be not ſolitary; be not idle*: which I would thus modify;—If you are idle, be not ſolitary; if you are ſolitary, be not idle.

"There is a letter for you, from

"Your humble ſervant,

"London, Oct. 27, 1779. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR, Carliſle, Nov. 7, 1779.

"That I ſhould importune you to write to me at Cheſter, is not wonderful, when you conſider what an avidity I have for delight; and that the *amor* of pleaſure like the *amor nummi*,

* I have a valuable collection made by my father, which, with ſome additions and illuſtrations of my own, I intend to publiſh. I have ſome hereditary claim to be an Antiquary; not only from my father, but as being deſcended, by the mother's ſide, of the able and learned Sir John Skene, whoſe merit bids defiance to all the attempts which have been made to leſſen his fame.

increaſes

increaſes in proportion with the quantity which we poſſeſs of it. Your letter, ſo full of polite kindneſs and maſterly counſel, came like a large treaſure upon me, while already glittering with riches. I was quite enchanted at Cheſter, ſo that I could with difficulty quit it. But the enchantment was the reverſe of that of Circe; for ſo far was there from being any thing ſenſual in it, that I was *all mind*. I do not mean all reaſon only; for my fancy was kept finely in play. And why not?—If you pleaſe I will ſend you a copy, or an abridgement of my Cheſter journal, which is truly a log-book of felicity. 1779. Ætat. 70.

"The Biſhop treated me with a kindneſs which was very flattering. I told him, that you regretted you had ſeen ſo little of Cheſter. His Lordſhip bid me tell you, that he ſhould be glad to ſhew you more of it. I am proud to find the friendſhip with which you honour me is known in ſo many places.

"I arrived here late laſt night. Our friend the Dean, has been gone from hence ſome months; but I am told at my inn, that he is very *populous* (popular). However, I found Mr. Law, the Archdeacon, ſon to the Biſhop, and with him I have breakfaſted and dined very agreeably. I got acquainted with him at the aſſizes here, about a year and a half ago; he is a man of great variety of knowledge, uncommon genius, and I believe ſincere religion. I received the holy ſacrament in the cathedral in the morning, this being the firſt Sunday of the month; and was at prayers there in the evening. It is divinely cheering to me to think that there is a Cathedral ſo near Auchinleck; and I now leave Old England in ſuch a ſtate of mind as I am thankful to God for granting me.

1779. Ætat. 70. "The *black dog* that worries me at home I cannot but dread; yet as I have been for ſome time paſt in a military train, I truſt I ſhall *repulſe* him. To hear from you will animate me like the ſound of a trumpet, I therefore hope that ſoon after my return to the Northern field, I ſhall receive a few lines from you.

"Colonel Stuart did me the honour to eſcort me in his carriage to ſhew me Liverpool, and from thence back to Warrington, where we parted*. In juſtice to my valuable wife, I muſt inform you, that as I was ſo happy, ſhe would not be ſo ſelfiſh as to wiſh me to return ſooner than buſineſs abſolutely required my preſence. She made my clerk write to me a poſt or two after to the ſame purpoſe, by commiſſion from her; and this day a kind letter from her met me at the Poſt-Office here, acquainting me that ſhe and the little ones were well, and expreſſing all their wiſhes for my return home. I am, more and more, my dear Sir,

"Your affectionate

"And obliged humble ſervant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"YOUR laſt letter was not only kind but fond. But I wiſh you to get rid of all intellectual exceſſes, and neither to exalt your pleaſures, nor aggravate your vexations, beyond their real

* His regiment was afterwards ordered to Jamaica, where he accompanied it, and almoſt loſt his life by the climate. This impartial order I ſhould think a ſufficient refutation of the idle rumour that "there was ſtill ſomething behind the throne greater than the throne itſelf."

and

and natural ſtate. Why ſhould you not be as happy at Edinburgh as at Cheſter, *In culpa eſt animus, qui ſe non effugit uſquam.* Pleaſe yourſelf with your wife and children, and ſtudies and practice. 1779. Ætat. 70.

"I have ſent a petition* from Lucy Porter, with which I leave it to your diſcretion, whether it is proper to comply. Return me her letter, which I have ſent that you may know the whole caſe, and not be ſeduced to any thing that you may afterwards repent. Miſs Doxy perhaps you know to be Mr. Garrick's niece.

"If Dean Percy can be popular at Carliſle, he may be very happy. He has in his diſpoſal two livings, each equal, or almoſt equal in value to the deanery; he may take one himſelf, and give the other to his ſon.

"How near is the Cathedral to Auchinleck, that you are ſo much delighted with it? It is, I ſuppoſe, at leaſt, an hundred and fifty miles off. However, if you are pleaſed, it is ſo far well.

"Let me know what reception you have from your father, and the ſtate of his health. Pleaſe him as much as you can, and add no pain to his laſt years.

"Of our friends here I can recollect nothing to tell you. I have neither ſeen nor heard of Langton. Beauclerk is juſt returned from Brighthelmſton, I am told, much better. Mr. Thrale and his family are ſtill there; and his health is ſaid to be viſibly improved; he has not bathed, but hunted.

* Requeſting me to enquire concerning the family of a gentleman who was then paying his addreſſes to Miſs Doxy.

"At

1779. Ætat. 70. "At Bolt-court there is much malignity, but of late little open hoſtility. I have had a cold, but it is gone.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boſwell, &c. I am, Sir,

"Your humble ſervant,

"London, Nov. 13, 1779. SAM. JOHNSON."

On November 22, and December 21, I wrote to him from Edinburgh, giving a very favourable report of the family of Miſs Doxy's lover;—that after a good deal of enquiry I had diſcovered the ſiſter of Mr. Francis Stewart, one of his amanuenſes when writing his dictionary;—that I had, as deſired by him, paid her a guinea for an old pocket book of her brother's which he had retained; and that the good woman, who was in very moderate circumſtances, but contented and placid, wondered at his ſcrupulous and liberal honeſty, and received the guinea as if ſent her by Providence.—That I had repeatedly begged of him to keep his promiſe to ſend me his letter to Lord Cheſterfield, and that this *memento* like *delenda eſt Carthago*, muſt be in every letter that I ſhould write to him, till I had obtained my object.

1780. In 1780 the world was kept in impatience for the completion of his "Lives of the Poets," upon which he was employed ſo far as his indolence allowed him to labour.

I wrote to him on January 1, and March 13, ſending him my notes of Lord Marchmont's information concerning Pope;—complaining that I had not heard from him for almoſt four months, though he was two letters in my debt; that I had ſuffered again from melancholy;—hoping that he had been in ſo much better company,

pany, (the Poets,) that he had not time to think of his diſtant friends; for if that were the caſe, I ſhould have ſome recompence for my uneaſineſs;—that the ſtate of my affairs did not admit of my coming to London this year; and, begging he would return me Goldſmith's two poems, with his lines marked. 1780. Ætat. 71.

His friend Dr. Lawrence having now ſuffered the greateſt affliction to which a man is liable, and which Johnſon himſelf had felt in the moſt ſevere manner; Johnſon wrote to him in an admirable ſtrain of ſympathy and pious conſolation.

To Dr. LAWRENCE.

"DEAR SIR,

"At a time when all your friends ſhew their kindneſs, and with a character which ought to make all that know you your friends, you may wonder that you have yet heard nothing from me.

"I have been hindered by a vexatious and inceſſant cough, for which within theſe ten days I have been bled once, faſted four or five times, taken phyſick five times, and opiates, I think, ſix. This day it ſeems to remit.

"The loſs, dear Sir, which you have lately ſuffered, I felt many years ago, and know therefore how much has been taken from you, and how little help can be had from conſolation. He that outlives a wife whom he has long loved, ſees himſelf diſjoined from the only mind that has the ſame hopes, and fears, and intereſt; from the only companion with whom he has ſhared much good or evil; and with whom he could ſet his mind at liberty, to retrace the paſt, or anticipate the future. The continuity of

1780. Ætat. 71. of being is lacerated; the ſettled courſe of ſentiment and action is ſtopped; and life ſtands ſuſpended and motionleſs, till it is driven by external cauſes into a new channel. But the time of ſuſpenſe is dreadful.

"Our firſt recourſe in this diſtreſsful ſolitude, is, perhaps, for want of habitual piety, to a gloomy acquieſcence in neceſſity. Of two mortal beings, one muſt loſe the other; but ſurely there is a higher and a better comfort to be drawn from the conſideration of that Providence which watches over all, and a belief that the living and dead are equally in the hands of GOD, who will reunite thoſe whom he has ſeparated, or who ſees that it is beſt not to unite them. I am, dear Sir,

"Your moſt affectionate,

"And moſt humble ſervant,

"Jan. 20, 1780. SAM. JOHNSON."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"WELL, I had reſolved to ſend you the Cheſterfield letter; but I will write once again without it. Never impoſe taſks upon mortals. To require two things is the way to have them both undone.

"For the difficulties which you mention in your affairs I am ſorry; but difficulty is now very general: it is not therefore leſs grievous, for there is leſs hope of help. I pretend not to give you advice, not knowing the ſtate of your affairs; and general counſels about prudence and frugality would do you little good. You are, however, in the right not to increaſe your own perplexity by a journey hither; and I hope that by ſtaying at home you will pleaſe your father.

"Poor

" Poor dear Beauclerk—*nec, ut ſoles, dabis joca.* His wit and his folly, his acuteneſs and maliciouſneſs, his merriment and reaſoning, are now over. Such another will not often be found among mankind. He directed himſelf to be buried by the ſide of his mother, an inſtance of tenderneſs which I hardly expected. He has left his children to the care of Lady Di. and if ſhe dies, of Mr. Langton, and of Mr. Leiceſter, his relation, and a man of good character. His library has been offered to ſale to the Ruſſian ambaſſador. 1780. Ætat. 71.

" Dr. Percy, notwithſtanding all the noiſe of the newſpapers, has had no literary loſs*. Clothes and moveables were burnt to the value of about one hundred pounds; but his papers, and I think his books, were all preſerved.

" Poor Mr. Thrale has been in extreme danger from an apoplectical diſorder, and recovered, beyond the expectation of his phyſicians; he is now at Bath, that his mind may be quiet, and Mrs. Thrale and Miſs are with him.

" Having told you what has happened to your friends, let me ſay ſomething to yourſelf. You are always complaining of melancholy, and I conclude from thoſe complaints that you are fond of it. No man talks of that which he is deſirous to conceal, and every man deſires to conceal that of which he is aſhamed. Do not pretend to deny it; *manifeſtum habemus furem*; make it an invariable and obligatory law to yourſelf, never to mention your own mental diſeaſes; if you are never to ſpeak of them you will think on them but little, and if you think little of them, they will moleſt you rarely.—

* By a fire in Northumberland-houſe, where he had an apartment, in which I have paſſed many an agreeable hour.

When

1780. Ætat. 71. When you talk of them, it is plain that you want either praiſe or pity; for praiſe there is no room, and pity will do you no good; therefore, from this hour ſpeak no more, think no more about them.

"Your tranſaction with Mrs. Stuart gave me great ſatisfaction; I am much obliged to you for your attention. Do not loſe ſight of her, your countenance may be of great credit, and of conſequence of great advantage to her. The memory of her brother is yet freſh in my mind; he was an ingenious and worthy man.

"Pleaſe to make my compliments to your lady, and to the young ladies. I ſhould like to ſee them, pretty loves. I am dear Sir,

"Yours, affectionately,

"April 8, 1780. SAM. JOHNSON."

Mrs. Thrale being now at Bath with her huſband, the correſpondence between Johnſon and her was carried on briſkly. I ſhall preſent my readers with one of her original letters to him at this time, which will amuſe them probably more than thoſe well-written but ſtudied epiſtles which ſhe has inſerted in her collection, becauſe it exhibits the eaſy vivacity of their literary intercourſe. It is alſo of value as a key to Johnſon's anſwer, which ſhe has printed by itſelf, and of which I ſhall ſubjoin extracts.

Mrs. THRALE *to Dr.* JOHNSON.

"I HAD a very kind letter from you yeſterday, dear Sir, with a moſt circumſtantial date. You took trouble with my circulating letter, Mr. Evans writes me word, and I thank

thank you ſincerely for ſo doing: one might do 1780.
miſchief elſe not being on the ſpot. Ætat. 71.

"Yeſterday's evening was paſſed at Mrs. Montague's: there was Mr. Melmoth; I do not like him though, nor he me; it was expected we ſhould have pleaſed each other; he is, however, juſt tory enough to hate the Biſhop of Peterborough for whiggiſm, and whig enough to abhor you for toryiſm.

"Mrs. Montagu flattered him finely; ſo he had a good afternoon on't. This evening we ſpend at a concert. Poor Queeney's* ſore eyes have juſt releaſed her; ſhe had a long confinement and could neither read nor write, ſo my maſter‡ treated her very good-naturedly with the viſits of a young woman in this town, a taylor's daughter, who profeſſes muſick, and teaches ſo as to give ſix leſſons a day to ladies, at five and three-pence a leſſon. Miſs Burney ſays ſhe is a great performer; and I reſpect the wench for getting her living ſo prettily; ſhe is very modeſt and pretty mannered, and not ſeventeen years old.

"You live in a fine whirl indeed, if I did not write regularly you would half forget me, and that would be very wrong, for I *felt* my regard for you in my *face* laſt night, when the criticiſms were going on.

"This morning it was all connoiſſeurſhip; we went to ſee ſome pictures painted by a gentleman artiſt, Mr. Taylor, of this place; my maſter makes one every where, and he has got a dawling companion to ride with him now. * * * * * * *. He looks well enough, but I have no notion of health for a man whoſe

* A kind of nick-name given to Mrs. Thrale's eldeſt daughter, whoſe name being *Eſther*, ſhe might be aſſimilated to a *Queen*.

‡ Mr. Thrale.

mouth

1780. Ætat. 71. mouth cannot be ſowed up. Burney and I and Queeny teize him every meal he eats, and Mr. Montagu is quite ſerious with him; but what *can* one do? He will eat, I think, and if he does eat I know he will not live; it makes me very unhappy, but I muſt bear it. Let me always have your friendſhip.

"I am moſt ſincerely, dear Sir,

"Your faithful ſervant,

"Bath, Friday, April 28. H. L. T."

Dr. JOHNSON *to Mrs.* THRALE.

"DEAREST MADAM,

"MR. THRALE never will live abſtinently, till he can perſuade himſelf to live by rule†. * * * * * * *. Encourage, as you can, the muſical girl.

"Nothing is more common than mutual diſlike where mutual approbation is particularly expected. There is often on both ſides a vigilance not over benevolent; and as attention is ſtrongly excited ſo that nothing drops unheeded, any difference in taſte or opinion, and ſome difference where there is no reſtraint, will commonly appear, it immediately generates diſlike.

"Never let criticiſm operate upon your face or your mind; it is very rarely that an authour is hurt by his criticks. The blaze of reputation cannot be blown out, but it often dies in the ſocket; a very few names may be conſidered as perpetual lamps that ſhine unconſumed. From the authour of 'Fitzoſborne's Letters' I cannot think myſelf in much danger. I met him only

† I have taken the liberty to leave out a few lines.

once

once about thirty years ago, and in ſome ſmall diſpute reduced him to whiſtle; having not ſeen him ſince, that is the laſt impreſſion. Poor Moor, the fabuliſt, was one of the company. 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Mrs. Montagu's long ſtay, againſt her own inclination, is very convenient. You would, by your own confeſſion, want a companion; and ſhe is *par pluribus*; converſing with her you may *find variety in one*."

"London, May 1, 1780.

On the 2d of May I wrote to him, and requeſted that we might have another meeting ſomewhere in the north of England, in the autumn of this year.

From Mr. Langton I received ſoon after this time a letter, of which I extract a paſſage, relative at once to Mr. Beauclerk and Dr. Johnſon.

"The melancholy information you have received concerning Mr. Beauclerk's death is true. Had his talents been directed in any ſufficient degree as they ought, I have always been ſtrongly of opinion that they were calculated to make an illuſtrious figure; and that opinion, as it had been in part formed upon Dr. Johnſon's judgement, receives more and more confirmation by hearing, that ſince his death, Dr. Johnſon has ſaid concerning them; a few evenings ago, he was at Mr. Veſey's, where Lord Althorpe, who was one of a numerous company there, addreſſed Dr. Johnſon on the ſubject of Mr. Beauclerk's death, ſaying, 'Our CLUB has had a great loſs ſince we met laſt.' He replied, 'A loſs, that perhaps the whole nation could not repair!' The Doctor then went on to ſpeak of his endowments, and particularly extolled the wonderful eaſe with which he uttered what was highly

1780. Ætat. 71. highly excellent. He ſaid, that no man ever was ſo free when he was going to ſay a good thing, from a *look* that expreſſed that it was coming; or, when he had ſaid it, from a look that expreſſed that it *had* come. At Mr. Thrale's, ſome days before, when we were talking on the ſame ſubject, he ſaid, referring to the ſame idea of his wonderful facility, 'That Beauclerk's talents were thoſe which he had felt himſelf more diſpoſed to envy, than thoſe of any whom he had known.'

"At the evening I have ſpoken of above, at Mr. Veſey's, you would have been gratified, as it exhibited an inſtance of the high importance in which Dr. Johnſon's character is held, I think even beyond any I ever before was witneſs to. The company conſiſted chiefly of ladies, among whom were the Ducheſs Dowager of Portland, the Ducheſs of Beaufort, whom I ſuppoſe from her rank, I muſt name before her mother, Mrs. Boſcawen, and her eldeſt ſiſter Mrs. Lewſon, who was likewiſe there; Lady Lucan, Lady Clermont, and others of note both for their ſtations and underſtandings. Among the gentlemen were, Lord Althorpe, whom I have before named, Lord Macartney, Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Lord Lucan, Mr. Wraxal, whoſe book you have probably ſeen, '*The Tour to the Northern Parts of Europe*;" a very agreeable ingenious man; Dr. Warren, Mr. Pepys, the Maſter in Chancery, whom I believe you know, and Dr. Barnard, the Provoſt of Eton. As ſoon as Dr. Johnſon was come in and had taken a chair, the company began to collect round him till they became not leſs than four if not five deep; thoſe behind ſtanding, and liſtening over the heads of thoſe that were ſitting near him.—The converſation for ſome time was chiefly between

tween Dr. Johnſon and the Provoſt of Eton, while the others contributed occaſionally their remarks. Without attempting to detail the particulars of the converſation, which perhaps if I did, ſhould ſpin my account out to a tedious length, I thought, my dear Sir, this general account of the reſpect with which our valued friend was attended to, might be acceptable." 1780. Ætat. 71.

To the Reverend Dr. FARMER.

"SIR, May 23, 1780.

"I KNOW your diſpoſition to ſecond any literary attempt, and therefore venture upon the liberty of entreating you to procure from College or Univerſity regiſters, all the dates, or other informations which they can ſupply relating to Ambroſe Philips, Broom, and Gray, who were all of Cambridge, and of whoſe lives I am to give ſuch accounts as I can gather. Be pleaſed to forgive this trouble from, Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

While Johnſon was thus engaged in preparing a delightful literary entertainment for the world, the tranquillity of the metropolis of Great Britain was unexpectedly diſturbed, by the moſt horrid ſeries of outrage that ever diſgraced a civilized country. A relaxation of ſome of the ſevere penal proviſions againſt our fellow ſubjects of the Catholick communion had been granted by the legiſlature, with an oppoſition ſo inconſiderable, that the genuine mildneſs of Chriſtianity, united with liberal policy, ſeemed to have become general in this iſland.—But a dark and malignant ſpirit of perſecution ſoon

1780. Ætat. 71. ſoon ſhewed itſelf, in an unworthy petition for the repeal of the wiſe and humane ſtatute. That petition was brought forward by a mob, with the evident purpoſe of intimidation, and was juſtly rejected. But the attempt was accompanied and followed by ſuch daring violence as is unexampled in hiſtory. Of this extraordinary tumult, Dr. Johnſon has given the following conciſe, lively, and juſt account in his "Letters to Mrs. Thrale*."

"On Friday, the good Proteſtants met in St. George's-Fields, at the ſummons of Lord George Gordon, and marching to Weſtminſter, inſulted the Lords and Commons, who all bore it with great tameneſs. At night the outrages began by the demolition of the maſs-houſe by Lincoln's-Inn.

"An exact journal of a week's defiance of government I cannot give you. On Monday, Mr. Strahan, who had been inſulted, ſpoke to Lord Mansfield, who had I think been inſulted too, of the licentiouſneſs of the populace; and his Lordſhip treated it as a very ſlight irregularity. On Tueſday night they pulled down Fielding's houſe, and burnt his goods in the ſtreet. They had gutted on Monday Sir George Savile's houſe, but the building was ſaved. On Tueſday evening, leaving Fielding's ruins, they went to Newgate to demand their companions who had been ſeized demoliſhing the chapel. The keeper could not releaſe them but by the Mayor's permiſſion, which he went to aſk; at his return he found all the priſoners releaſed, and Newgate in a blaze. They then went to Bloomſbury, and faſtened upon Lord Mansfield's houſe, which

* Vol. II. p. 143, *et ſeq.* I have ſelected paſſages from ſeveral letters, without mentioning dates.

they

they pulled down; and as for his goods, they totally burnt them. They have ſince gone to Caen-wood, but a guard was there before them. They plundered ſome Papiſts, I think, and burnt a maſs-houſe in Moorfields the ſame night." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"On Wedneſday I walked with Dr. Scott to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Proteſtants were plundering the Seſſions-houſe at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leiſure, in full ſecurity, without ſentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed, in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wedneſday they broke open the Fleet, and the King's Bench, and the Marſhalſea, and Wood-ſtreet Compter, and Clerkenwell Bridewell, and releaſed all the priſoners."

"At night they ſet fire to the Fleet, and to the King's Bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might ſee the glare of conflagration fill the ſky from many parts. The ſight was dreadful. Some people were threatened: Mr. Strahan adviſed me to take care of myſelf. Such a time of terrour you have been happy in not ſeeing."

"The King ſaid in council, 'That the magiſtrates had not done their duty, but that he would do his own;' and a proclamation was publiſhed, directing us to keep our ſervants within doors, as the peace was now to be preſerved by force. The ſoldiers were ſent out to different parts, and the town is now at quiet."

"The ſoldiers are ſtationed ſo as to be every where within call; there is no longer any body of rioters, and the individuals are hunted to their holes, and led to priſon; Lord George

1780. Æt. 71. was laſt night ſent to the Tower. Mr. John Wilkes was this day in my neighbourhood, to ſeize the publiſhers of a ſeditious paper."

"Several chapels have been deſtroyed, and ſeveral inoffenſive Papiſts have been plundered; but the high ſport was to burn the gaols. This was a good rabble trick. The debtors and the criminals were all ſet at liberty; but of the criminals, as has always happened, many are already re-taken: and two pirates have ſurrendered themſelves, and it is expected that they will be pardoned."

"Government now acts again with its proper force; and we are all again under the protection of the King and the law. I thought it would be agreeable to you and my maſter to have my teſtimony to the publick ſecurity; and that you would ſleep more quietly when I told you that you are ſafe."

"There has, indeed, been an univerſal panick, from which the King was the firſt that recovered. Without the concurrence of his miniſters, or the aſſiſtance of the civil magiſtrate, he put the ſoldiers in motion, and ſaved the town from calamities, ſuch as a rabble's government muſt naturally produce."

"The publick has eſcaped a very heavy calamity. The rioters attempted the Bank on Wedneſday night, but in no great number; and like other thieves, with no great reſolution.—Jack Wilkes headed the party that drove them away. It is agreed, that if they had ſeized the Bank on Tueſday, at the height of the panick, when no reſiſtance had been prepared, they might have carried irrecoverably away whatever they had found. Jack who was always zealous for order and decency, declares, that if he be truſted with power, he will not leave a rioter

rioter alive. There is, however, now no longer any need of heroiſm or bloodſhed; no blue ribband is any longer worn." 1780. Ætat. 71.

Such was the end of this miſerable ſedition, from which London was delivered by the magnanimity of the Sovereign himſelf. Whatever ſome may maintain, I am ſatisfied that there was no combination or plan, either domeſtic or foreign; but that the miſchief ſpread by a gradual contagion of frenzy, augmented by the quantities of fermented liquors, of which the deluded populace poſſeſſed themſelves in the courſe of their depredations.

I ſhould think myſelf very much to blame, did I here neglect to do juſtice to my eſteemed friend Mr. Akerman, the keeper of Newgate, who has long diſcharged a very important truſt with an uniform intrepid firmneſs, and at the ſame time a tenderneſs and a liberal charity, which entitle him to be recorded with diſtinguiſhed honour.

Upon this occaſion, from the timidity and negligence of magiſtracy on the one hand, and the almoſt incredible exertions of the mob on the other, the firſt priſon of this great country was laid open, and the priſoners ſet free; but that Mr. Akerman, whoſe houſe was burnt, would have prevented all this, had proper aid been ſent to him in due time, there can be no doubt.

Many years ago, a fire broke out in the brick part, which was built as an addition to the old gaol of Newgate. The priſoners were in conſternation and tumult, calling out, "We ſhall be burnt—we ſhall be burnt! down with the gate—down with the gate!" Mr. Akerman haſtened to them, ſhewed himſelf at the gate, and having, after ſome confuſed vociferation

1780. Ætat. 71.

tion of "Hear him—hear him!" obtained a ſilent attention, he then calmly told them, that the gate muſt not go down; that they were under his care, and that they ſhould not be permitted to eſcape: but that he could aſſure them, they need not be afraid of being burnt, for that the fire was not in the priſon, properly ſo called, which was ſtrongly built with ſtone; and that if they would engage to be quiet, he himſelf would come in to them, and conduct them to the further end of the building, and would not go out till they gave him leave. To this propoſal they agreed; upon which Mr. Akerman, having firſt made them fall back from the gate, went in, and with a determined reſolution ordered the outer turnkey upon no account to open the gate, even though the priſoners (though he truſted they would not) ſhould break their word, and by force bring himſelf to order it. "Never mind me, (ſaid he,) ſhould that happen." The priſoners peaceably followed him, while he conducted them through paſſages, of which he had the keys, to the extremity of the gaol, which was moſt diſtant from the fire.—Having, by this very judicious conduct, fully ſatisfied them that there was no immediate riſk, if any at all, he then addreſſed them thus:—"Gentlemen, you are now convinced that I told you true. I have no doubt that the engines will ſoon extinguiſh this fire: if they ſhould not, a ſufficient guard will come, and you ſhall all be taken out and lodged in the Compters. I aſſure you, upon my word and honour, that I have not a farthing inſured. I have left my houſe that I might take care of you. I will keep my promiſe, and ſtay with you, if you inſiſt upon it: but if you will allow me to go out and look after my family and property, I will be obliged to you."

you." Struck with his behaviour, they called out, "Maſter Akerman, you have done bravely; it was very kind in you: by all means go and take care of your own concerns." He did ſo accordingly, while they remained and were all preſerved. 1780. Ætat. 71.

Johnſon has been heard to relate the ſubſtance of this ſtory with high praiſe, in which he was joined by Mr. Burke. My illuſtrious friend, ſpeaking of Mr. Akerman's kindneſs to his priſoners, pronounced this eulogy upon his character:—"He who has long had conſtantly in his view the worſt of mankind, and is yet eminent for the humanity of his diſpoſition, muſt have had it originally in a great degree, and continued to cultivate it very carefully."

In the courſe of this month my brother David waited upon Dr. Johnſon, with the following letter of introduction, which I had taken care ſhould be lying ready on his arrival in London.

To Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"MY DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, April 29, 1780.

"THIS will be delivered to you by my brother David, on his return from Spain. You will be glad to ſee the man who vowed to 'ſtand by the old caſtle of Auchinleck, with heart, purſe, and ſword;' that romantick family ſolemnity deviſed by me, of which you and I talked with complacency upon the ſpot. I truſt that twelve years of abſence have not leſſened his feudal attachment; and that you will find him worthy of being introduced to your acquaintance.

"I have the honour to be, with affectionate veneration, my dear Sir,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

Johnſon

1780. Ætat. 71. Johnſon received him very politely, and has thus mentioned him in a letter to Mrs. Thrale :* "I have had with me a brother of Boſwell's, a Spaniſh merchant,† whom the war has driven from his reſidence at Valencia; he is gone to ſee his friends, and will find Scotland but a ſorry place after twelve years reſidence in a happier climate. He is a very agreeable man, and ſpeaks no Scotch."

To Dr. BEATTIE, *at* ABERDEEN.

"SIR,

"MORE years§ than I have any delight to reckon, have paſt ſince you and I ſaw one another; of this, however, there is no reaſon for making any reprehenſory complaint, *ſic fata ferunt*. But methinks there might paſs ſome ſmall interchange of regard between us. If you ſay, that I ought to have written, I now write, and I write to tell you, that I have much kindneſs for you and Mrs. Beattie; and that I wiſh your health better, and your life long. Try change of air, and come a few degrees ſouthwards; a ſofter climate may do you both good; winter is coming on, and London will be warmer, and gayer, and buſier, and more fertile of amuſement than Aberdeen.

"My health is better; but that will be little in the balance, when I tell you that Mrs. Montagu has been very ill, and is I doubt now but weakly. Mr. Thrale has been very dangerouſly diſordered; but is much better, and I hope

* Vol. II. p. 163. Mrs. Piozzi has ommitted the name, ſhe beſt knows why.

† Now ſettled in London.

§ I had been five years abſent from London.

will

will totally recover. He has withdrawn himſelf from buſineſs the whole ſummer. Sir Joſhua and his ſiſter are well; and Mr. Davies has had great ſucceſs as an authour†, generated by the corruption of a bookſeller. More news I have not to tell you, and therefore you muſt be contented with hearing, what I know not whether you much wiſh to hear,* that I am, Sir,

1780. Ætat. 71.

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"Bolt-court, Fleet-ſtreet, Aug. 21, 1780. SAM. JOHNSON."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I FIND you have taken one of your fits of taciturnity, and have reſolved not to write till you are written to; it is but a peeviſh humour, but you ſhall have your way.

"I have ſate at home in Bolt-court, all the ſummer, thinking to write the Lives, and a great part of the time only thinking. Several of them, however are done, and I ſtill think to do the reſt.

"Mr. Thrale and his family have, ſince his illneſs, paſſed their time firſt at Bath, and then at Brighthelmſton; but I have been at neither

† Meaning his entertaining "Memoirs of David Garrick, Eſq." of which Johnſon (as Davies informed me) wrote the firſt ſentence; thus, giving as it were, the key-note to the performance. It is, indeed, very characteriſtical of its authour, beginning with a maxim, and proceeding to illuſtrate.——"All excellence has a right to be recorded. I ſhall, therefore think it ſuperfluous to apologiſe for writing the life of a man, who by an uncommon aſſemblage of private virtues, adorned the higheſt eminence in a public profeſſion."

* I wiſh he had omitted the ſuſpicion expreſſed here, though I believe he meant nothing but jocularity; for though he and I differed ſometimes in opinion, he well knew how much I loved and revered him. BEATTIE.

place.

1780. Ætat. 71. place. I would have gone to Litchfield, if I could have had time, and I might have had time, if I had been active; but I have miſſed much, and done little.

"In the late diſturbances, Mr. Thrale's houſe and ſtock were in great danger; the mob was pacified at their firſt invaſion, with about fifty pounds in drink and meat; and at their ſecond, were driven away by the ſoldiers. Mr. Strahan got a garriſon into his houſe, and maintained them a fortnight; he was ſo frighted that he removed part of his goods. Mrs. Williams took ſhelter in the country.

"I know not whether I ſhall get a ramble this autumn; it is now about the time when we were travelling. I have, however, better health than I had then, and hope you and I may yet ſhew ourſelves on ſome part of Europe, Aſia, or Africa.* In the mean time let us play no trick, but keep each other's kindneſs by all means in our power.

"The bearer of this is Dr. Dunbar, of Aberdeen, who has written and publiſhed a very ingenious book,† and who I think has a kindneſs for me, and will when he knows you have a kindneſs for you.

"I ſuppoſe your little ladies are grown tall; and your ſon is become a learned young man.

* It will, no doubt be remarked how he avoided the *rebellious* land of America. This puts me in mind of an anecdote, for which I am obliged to my worthy ſocial friend, Governour Penn: "At one of Miſs E. Hervey's aſſemblies, Dr. Johnſon was following her up and down the room; upon which Lord Abingdon obſerved to her, 'Your great friend is very fond of you, you can go no where without him.' 'Aye, (ſaid ſhe,) he would follow me to any part of the world.' 'Then (ſaid the Earl,) aſk him to go with you to *America*."

† "Eſſays on the Hiſtory of Mankind."

I love

I love them all, and I love your naughty lady, whom I never ſhall perſuade to love me. When the Lives are done, I ſhall ſend them to complete her collection, but muſt ſend them in paper, as for want of a pattern, I cannot bind them to fit the reſt. I am, Sir, 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Yours moſt affectionately,

"London, Aug. 21, 1780. SAM. JOHNSON."

This year he wrote to a young clergyman in the country, the following very excellent letter, which contains valuable advice to divines in general:

"DEAR SIR,

"NOT many days ago Dr. Lawrence ſhewed me a letter, in which you make mention of me: I hope, therefore, you will not be diſpleaſed that I endeavour to preſerve your good-will by ſome obſervations which your letter ſuggeſted to me.

"You are afraid of falling into ſome impropriеties in the daily ſervice, by reading to an audience that requires no exactneſs. Your fear, I hope, ſecures you from danger. They who contract abſurd habits are ſuch as have no fear. It is impoſſible to do the ſame thing very often, without ſome peculiarity of manner: but that manner may be good or bad, and a little care will at leaſt preſerve it from being bad: to make it very good, there muſt, I think, be ſomething of natural or caſual felicity, which cannot be taught.

"Your preſent method of making your ſermons ſeems very judicious. Few frequent preachers can be ſuppoſed to have ſermons more their own than yours will be. Take care to regiſter, ſomewhere or other, the authours from whom

1780. Ætat. 71. whom your ſeveral diſcourſes are borrowed; and do not imagine that you ſhall always remember, even what perhaps you now think it impoſſible to forget.

"My advice, however, is, that you attempt, from time to time, an original ſermon; and in the labour of compoſition, do not burden your mind with too much at once; do not exact from yourſelf, at one effort of excogitation, propriety of thought and elegance of expreſſion. Invent firſt, and then embelliſh. The production of ſomething, where nothing was before, is an act of greater energy than the expanſion or decoration of the thing produced. Set down diligently your thoughts as they riſe, in the firſt words that occur; and when you have matter, you will eaſily give it form: nor, perhaps, will this method be always neceſſary: for, by habit, your thoughts and diction will flow together.

"The compoſition of ſermons is not very difficult: the diviſions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they ſupply ſources of invention, and keep every part in its proper place.

"What I like leaſt in your letter, is your account of the manners of your pariſh; from which I gather, that it has been long neglected by the parſon. The Dean of Carliſle*, who was then a little rector in Northamptonſhire, told me, that it might be diſcerned whether or no there was a clergyman reſident in a pariſh, by the civil or ſavage manner of the people. Such a congregation as yours ſtand in much need of reformation; and I would not have you think it impoſſible to reform them. A very ſavage pariſh was civiliſed by a decayed gentlewoman, who

*Dr. Percy, now Biſhop of Dromore.

came

came among them to teach a petty ſchool. My learned friend Dr. Wheeler of Oxford, when he was a young man had the care of a neighbouring pariſh for fifteen pounds a year, which he was never paid; but he counted it a convenience that it compelled him to make a ſermon weekly. One woman he could not bring to the communion; and when he reproved or exhorted her, ſhe only anſwered, that ſhe was no ſcholar. He was adviſed to ſet ſome good woman or man of the pariſh, a little wiſer than herſelf, to talk to her in language level to her mind. Such honeſt, I may call them holy artifices, muſt be practiſed by every clergyman; for all means muſt be tried by which ſouls may be ſaved. Talk to your people, however, as much as you can; and you will find, that the more frequently you converſe with them upon religious ſubjects, the more willingly they will attend, and the more ſubmiſſively they will learn. A clergyman's diligence always makes him venerable. I think I have now only to ſay, that in the momentous work you have undertaken, I pray GOD to bleſs you. I am, Sir,

1780. Ætat. 71.

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"Bolt-court, Aug. 30, 1780. SAM. JOHNSON."

My next letters to him were of dates Aug. 24, September 6, and October 1, and from them I extract the following paſſages:

"My brother David and I find the long indulged fancy of our comfortable meeting again at Auchinleck, ſo well realiſed, that it in ſome degree confirms the pleaſing hope of *O! præclarum diem!* in a future ſtate.

"I beg that you may never again harbour a ſuſpicion of my indulging a peeviſh humour, or playing tricks; you will recollect, that when I con-

1780. Ætat. 71. I confeſſed to you, that when I had once been intentionally ſilent to try your regard, I gave you my word and honour that I ſhould not do ſo again.

"I rejoice to hear of your good ſtate of health; I pray GOD to continue it long. I have often ſaid, that I would willingly have ten years added to my life, to have ten taken from yours; I mean that I would be ten years older, to have you ten years younger. But let me be thankful for the years during which I have enjoyed your friendſhip, and pleaſe myſelf with the hope of enjoying it many years to come in this ſtate of being, truſting, always, that in another ſtate, we ſhall meet never to be ſeparated. Of this we can form no notion; but the thought, though indiſtinct, is delightful, when the mind is calm and clear.

"The riots in London were certainly horrible; but you give me no account of your own ſituation, during the barbarous anarchy. A deſcription of it by DR. JOHNSON would be a great painting;* you might write another 'LONDON, A POEM.'

"I am charmed with your condeſcending affectionate expreſſion, 'let us keep each other's kindneſs by all the means in our power;' my revered friend! how elevating is it to my mind, that I am found worthy to be a companion to Dr. Samuel Johnſon! All that you have ſaid in grateful praiſe of Mr. Walmſley, I have long thought of you; but we are both Tories, which has a very general influence upon our ſentiments. I hope that you will agree to meet me at York, about the end of this month; or if you will come to Carliſle, that would be better ſtill, in

* I had not then ſeen his letters to Mrs. Thrale.

caſe

caſe the Dean be there. Pleaſe to conſider, that to keep each other's kindneſs, we ſhould every year have that free and intimate communication of mind which can be had only when we are together. We ſhould have both our ſolemn and our pleaſant talk. 1780. Ætat. 71.

"I write now for the third time, to tell you, that my deſire for our meeting this autumn, is much increaſed. I wrote to 'ſquire Godfrey Boſville, my Yorkſhire Chief, that I ſhould, perhaps, pay him a viſit, as I was to hold a conference with Dr. Johnſon, at York. I give you my word and honour that I ſaid not a word of his inviting you; but he wrote to me as follows:

'I need not tell you I ſhall be happy to ſee you here the latter end of this month, as you propoſe; and I ſhall likewiſe be in hopes that you will perſuade Dr. Johnſon to finiſh the conference here. It will add to the favour of your own company, if you prevail upon ſuch an aſſociate, to aſſiſt your obſervations. I have often been entertained with his writings, and I once belonged to a club, of which he was a member, and I never ſpent an evening there, but I heard ſomething from him well worth remembering.'

"We have three, my dear Sir, good comfortable quarters in the neighbourhood of York, where you may be aſſured we ſhall be heartily welcome. I pray you then reſolve to ſet out; and let not the year 1780 be a blank in our ſocial calendar, and in that record of wiſdom and wit, which I keep with ſo much diligence, to your honour, and the inſtruction and delight of others."

Mr. Thrale had now another conteſt for the repreſentation in parliament of the borough of Southwark,

1780. Ætat. 71. Southwark, and Johnſon kindly lent him his aſſiſtance, by writing advertiſements and letters for him. I ſhall inſert one, as a ſpecimen:

To the worthy Electors of the borough of Southwark.

"GENTLEMEN,

"A NEW Parliament being now called, I again ſolicit the honour of being elected for one of your repreſentatives, and ſolicit it with the greater confidence, as I am not conſcious of having neglected my duty, or of having acted otherwiſe than as becomes the independent repreſentative of independent conſtituents, ſuperiour to fear, hope, and expectation, who has no private purpoſes to promote, and whoſe proſperity is involved in the proſperity of his country. As my recovery from a very ſevere diſtemper is not yet perfect, I have declined to attend the Hall, and hope an omiſſion ſo neceſſary will not be harſhly cenſured.

"I can only ſend my reſpectful wiſhes, that all your deliberations may tend to the happineſs of the kingdom, and the peace of the borough. I am, Gentlemen,

"Your moſt faithful and obedient ſervant,

"Southwark, Sept. 5, 1780. HENRY THRALE."

On his birth-day, Johnſon has this note, "I am now beginning the ſeventy-ſecond year of my life, with more ſtrength of body, and greater vigour of mind, than I think is common at that age." But ſtill he complains of ſleepleſs nights and idle days, and forgetfulneſs, or neglect of reſolutions. He thus pathetically expreſſes himſelf, "Surely I ſhall not ſpend my whole life with my own total diſapprobation*."

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 185.

Mr.

Mr. Macbean, whom I have mentioned more than once, as one of Johnſon's humble friends, a deſerving but unfortunate man, being now oppreſſed by age and poverty, Johnſon ſolicited the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, to have him admitted into the Charter-houſe. I take the liberty to inſert his Lordſhip's anſwer, as I am eager to embrace every occaſion of augmenting the reſpectable notion which ſhould ever be entertained of my illuſtrious friend: 1780. Ætat. 71.

To Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"SIR, London, Oct. 24, 1780.

"I HAVE this moment received your letter, dated the 19th, and returned from Bath.

"In the beginning of the ſummer I placed one in the Chartreux, without the ſanction of a recommendation ſo diſtinct, and ſo authoritative as yours of Macbean; and I am afraid, that according to the eſtabliſhment of the houſe, the opportunity of making the charity ſo good amends will not ſoon recur. But whenever a vacancy ſhall happen, if you'll favour me with notice of it, I will try to recommend him to the place, even though it ſhould not be my turn to nominate. I am, Sir, with great regard,

"Your moſt faithful,

"And obedient ſervant,

"THURLOW."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I AM ſorry to write you a letter that will not pleaſe you, and yet it is at laſt what I reſolve to do. This year muſt paſs without an interview; the ſummer has been fooliſhly loſt, like many

1780. Ætat. 71. many other of my ſummers and winters. I hardly ſaw a green field, but ſtaid in town to work, without working much.

"Mr. Thrale's loſs of health has loſt him the election; he is now going to Brighthelmſton, and expects me to go with him, and how long I ſhall ſtay I cannot tell. I do not much like the place, but yet I ſhall go, and ſtay while my ſtay is deſired. We muſt, therefore, content ourſelves with knowing what we know as well as man can know the mind of man, that we love one another, and that we wiſh each other's happineſs, and that the lapſe of a year cannot leſſen our mutual kindneſs.

"I was pleaſed to be told that I accuſed Mrs. Boſwell unjuſtly, in ſuppoſing that ſhe bears me ill-will. I love you ſo much, that I would be glad to love all that love you, and that you love; and I have love very ready for Mrs. Boſwell, if ſhe thinks it worthy of acceptance. I hope all the young ladies and gentlemen are well.

"I take a great liking to your brother. He tells me that his father received him kindly but not fondly; however, you ſeemed to have lived well enough at Auchinleck, while you ſtaid. Make your father as happy as you can.

"You lately told me of your health: I can tell you in return, that my health has been for more than a year paſt, better than it has been for many years before. Perhaps it may pleaſe God to give us ſome time together before we are parted. I am, dear Sir,

"Yours, moſt affectionately,

"Oct. 17, 1780. SAM. JOHNSON."

Being diſappointed in my hopes of meeting Johnſon this year, ſo that I could hear none of his

his admirable ſayings, I ſhall compenſate for this want by inſerting a collection of them, for which I am indebted to my worthy friend Mr. Langton, whoſe kind communications have been ſeparately interwoven in many parts of this work. A very few articles of this collection were committed to writing by himſelf, he not having that habit; which he regrets, and which thoſe who know the numerous opportunities he had of gathering the rich fruits of *Johnſonian* wit and wiſdom, muſt ever regret. I however found, in converſations with him, that a good ſtore of *Johnſoniana* was treaſured in his mind; and I compared it to Herculaneum, or ſome old Roman field, which when dug, fully rewards the labour employed. The authenticity of every article is unqueſtionable. For the expreſſion, I, who wrote them down in his preſence, am partly anſwerable. 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Theocritus is not deſerving of very high reſpect as a writer; as to the paſtoral part, Virgil is very evidently far ſuperiour. He wrote when there had been a larger influx of knowledge into the world than when Theocritus lived. Theocritus does not abound in deſcription, though living in a beautiful country: the manners painted are coarſe and groſs. Virgil has much more deſcription, more ſentiment, more of nature, and more of art. Some of the moſt excellent parts of Theocritus are, where Caſtor and Pollux, going with the other Argonauts, land on the Bebrycian coaſt, and there fall into a diſpute with Amycus, the King of that country; which is as well conducted as Euripides could have done it; and the battle is well related. Afterwards they carry off a woman, whoſe two brothers come to recover her, and expoſtulate with Caſtor and Pollux on their in-

1780. Ætat. 71. juſtice; but they pay no regard to the brothers, and a battle enſues, where Caſtor and his brother are triumphant. Theocritus ſeems not to have ſeen that the brothers have the advantage in their argument over his Argonaut heroes.—'The Sicilian Goſſips' is a piece of merit."

"Callimachus is a writer of little excellence. The chief thing to be learned from him is his account of Rites and Mythology; which, tho' deſirable to be known for the ſake of underſtanding other parts of ancient authours, is the leaſt pleaſing or valuable part of their writings."

"Mattaire's account of the Stephani is a heavy book. He ſeems to have been a puzzle-headed man, with a large ſhare of ſcholarſhip, but with little geometry or logick in his head, without method, and poſſeſſed of little genius. He wrote Latin verſes from time to time, and publiſhed a ſet in his old age, which he called '*Senilia*;' in which he ſhews ſo little learning or taſte in writing, as to make *Carteret* a dactyl. In matters of genealogy it is neceſſary to give the bare names as they are; but in poetry, and in proſe of any elegance in the writing, they require to have inflection given to them.—His book of the Dialects is a ſad heap of confuſion; the only way to write on them is to tabulate them with notes, added at the bottom of the page, and references."

"It may be queſtioned, whether there is not ſome miſtake as to the methods of employing the poor, ſeemingly on a ſuppoſition that there is a certain portion of work left undone for want of perſons to do it; but if that is otherwiſe, and all the materials we have are actually worked up, or all the manufactures we can uſe or diſpoſe of are already executed, then what is given to the poor, who are to be ſet at work, muſt be taken

taken from ſome who now have it, as time muſt be taken for learning, according to Sir William Petty's obſervation; a certain part of thoſe very materials that, as it is, are properly worked up, muſt be ſpoiled by the unſkilfulneſs of novices. We may apply to well-meaning, but misjudging perſons in particular of this nature, what Giannone ſaid to a monk, who wanted what he called to convert him: '*Tu ſes ſanto ma tu non ſes Filoſofo.*'—It is an unhappy circumſtance that one might give away five hundred pounds in a year to thoſe that importune in the ſtreets, and not do any good." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"There is nothing more likely to betray a man into abſurdity than *condeſcenſion*; when he ſeems to ſuppoſe his underſtanding too powerful for his company."

"Having aſked Mr. Langton if his father and mother had ſate for their pictures, which he thought it right for each generation of a family to do, and being told they had oppoſed it, he ſaid, "Sir, among the infractuoſities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a ſuperſtitious reluctance to ſit for a picture."

"John Gilbert Cooper related, that ſoon after the publication of his Dictionary, Garrick being aſked by Johnſon what people ſaid of it, told him that among other animadverſions, it was objected that he cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of ſuch a work, and mentioned Richardſon. 'Nay, (ſaid Johnſon,) I have done worſe than that: I have cited thee, David."

"Talking of expence, he obſerved, with what munificence a great merchant will ſpend his money, both from his having it at command, and from his enlarged views by calculation of a good effect upon the whole. 'Whereas (ſaid

1780. Ætat. 71. he) you will hardly ever find a country gentleman who is not a good deal disconcerted at an unexpected occasion for his being obliged to lay out ten pounds."

"When in good humour he would talk of his own writings with a wonderful frankness and candour, and would even criticise them with the closest severity. One day, having read over one of his Ramblers, Mr. Langton asked him, how he liked that paper; he shook his head, and answered, 'too wordy.' And at another time, when one was reading his tragedy of 'Irene,' to a company at a house in the country, he left the room; and somebody having asked him the reason of this, he replied, 'Sir, I thought it had been better."

"Talking of a point of delicate scrupulosity of moral conduct, he said to Mr. Langton, 'Men of harder minds than ours will do many things from which you and I would shrink; yet, Sir, they will, perhaps, do more good in life than we. But let us try to help one another. If there be a wrong twist, it may be set right. It is not probable that two people can be wrong the same way."

"Of the Preface to Capel's Shakspeare, he said, 'If the man would have come to me, I would have endeavoured to 'endow his purposes with words; for, as it is, 'he doth gabble monstrously."

"He related, that he had once in a dream a contest of wit with some other person, and that he was very much mortified by imagining that his opponent had the better of him. 'Now (said he) one may mark here the effect of sleep in weakening the power of reflection; for had not my judgment failed me, I should have seen, that the wit of this supposed antagonist, by whose supe-

ſuperiority I felt myſelf depreſſed, was as much furniſhed by me, as that which I thought I had been uttering in my own character." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"One evening in company, an ingenious and learned gentleman read a letter of compliment to him from one of the Profeſſors of a foreign univerſity. Johnſon, in an irritable fit, thinking there was too much oſtenſtation, ſaid, 'I never receive any of theſe tributes of applauſe from abroad. One inſtance I recollect of a foreign publication, in which mention is made of *Pilluſtre Lockman*."

"Of Sir Joſhua Reynolds he ſaid, 'Sir, I know no man who has paſſed through life with more obſervation than Reynolds."

"He repeated to Mr. Langton, with great energy, our SAVIOUR's gracious expreſſion concerning the forgiveneſs of Mary Magdalen, 'Thy faith hath ſaved thee; go in peace.*' He ſaid, 'the manner of this diſmiſſion is exceedingly affecting."

"He thus defined the difference between phyſical and moral truth; 'phyſical truth is, when you tell a thing as it actually is. Moral truth is, when you tell a thing ſincerely and preciſely as it appears to you. I ſay ſuch a one walked acroſs the ſtreet; if he really did ſo I told a phyſical truth. If I thought ſo, though I ſhould have been miſtaken, I told a moral truth."

"Huggins, the tranſlator of Arioſto, and Mr. Thomas Warton, in the early part of his literary life, had a diſpute concerning that poet, of whom Mr. Warton, in his 'Obſervations on Spencer's Fairy Queen,' gave ſome account, which Huggins attempted to anſwer with violence, and ſaid, I will *militate* no longer againſt

* Luke vii. 50.

his

1780. Ætat. 71. his *neſcience*'. Huggins was maſter of the ſubject, but wanted expreſſion. Mr. Warton's knowledge of it was then imperfect, but his manner lively and elegant. Johnſon ſaid, 'It appears to me, that Huggins has ball without powder, and Warton powder without ball."

"Talking of the Farce of 'High Life below Stairs,' he ſaid, 'Here is a farce, which is really very diverting when you ſee it acted; and yet one may read it, and not know that one has been reading any thing at all."

"He uſed at one time to go occaſionally to the green-room of Drury-lane theatre, where he was much regarded by the players, and was very eaſy and facetious with them. He had a very high opinion of Mrs. Clive's comick powers, and converſed more with her than any of them. He ſaid, 'Clive, Sir, is a good thing to ſit by, ſhe always underſtands what you ſay.' And ſhe ſaid of him, 'I love to ſit by Dr. Johnſon, he always entertains me.' One night when 'The Recruiting Officer' was acted, he ſaid to Mr. Holland, who had been expreſſing an apprehenſion that Dr. Johnſon would diſdain the works of Farquhar: 'No, Sir, I think Farquhar a man whoſe writings have conſiderable merit."

"His friend Garrick was ſo buſy in conducting the drama, that they could not have ſo much intercourſe as Mr. Garrick uſed to profeſs an anxious wiſh that there ſhould be. There might indeed be ſomething in the contemptuous ſeverity as to the merit of acting, which his old preceptor nouriſhed in himſelf, that would mortify Garrick after the great applauſe which he received from the audience. For though Johnſon ſaid of him, 'Sir, a man who has a nation to admire him every night, may well be expected

pected to be ſomewhat elated;' yet he would treat theatrical matters with a ludicrous ſlight. He mentioned one evening, 'I met David coming off the ſtage, dreſt in a woman's riding-hood, when he acted in The Wonder; I came full upon him, and I believe he was not pleaſed." 1779. Ætat. 71.

"Once he aſked Tom Davies, whom he ſaw dreſt in a fine ſuit of clothes, 'And what art thou to-night?' Tom anſwered, 'The Thane of Roſs; (which it will be recollected is a very inconſiderable character). 'O brave!' ſaid Johnſon."

"Of Mr. Longley, at Rocheſter, a gentleman of very conſiderable learning, whom Dr. Johnſon met there, he ſaid, 'My heart warms towards him. I was ſurprized to find in him ſuch a nice acquaintance with the metre in the learned languages; though I was ſomewhat mortified that I had it not ſo much to myſelf, as I ſhould have thought."

"Talking of the minuteneſs with which people will record the ſayings of eminent perſons, a ſtory was told, that when Pope was on a viſit to Spence at Oxford, as they looked from the window they ſaw a gentleman commoner, who was juſt come in from riding, amuſing himſelf with whipping at a poſt. Pope took occaſion to ſay, 'That young gentleman ſeems to have little to do.' Mr. Beauclerk obſerved, 'Then, to be ſure, Spence turned round and wrote that down;' and went on to ſay to Dr. Johnſon, 'Pope, Sir, would have ſaid the ſame of you, if he had ſeen you diſtilling." JOHNSON. 'Sir, if Pope had told me of my diſtilling, I would have told him of his grotto."

He would allow no ſettled indulgence of idleneſs upon principle, and always repelled every

1780. Ætat. 71. every attempt to urge excuſes for it. A friend one day ſuggeſted, that it was not wholeſome to ſtudy ſoon after dinner. JOHNSON. "Ah, Sir, don't give way to ſuch a fancy. At one time of my life I had taken it into my head that it was not wholeſome to ſtudy between breakfaſt and dinner.

"Mr. Beauclerk one day repeated to Dr. Johnſon, Pope's lines,

'Let modeſt Foſter, if he will, excel
'Ten metropolitans in preaching well:'

Then aſked the Doctor, 'Why did Pope ſay this?' JOHNSON. 'Sir, he hoped it would vex ſomebody."

"Dr. Goldſmith, upon occaſion of Mrs. Lennox's bringing out a play, ſaid to Dr. Johnſon at the CLUB, that a perſon had adviſed him to go and hiſs it, becauſe ſhe attacked Shakſpeare in her book called 'Shakſpeare illuſtrated.'—— JOHNSON. 'And did you not tell him that he was a raſcal?' GOLDSMITH. 'No, Sir, I did not. Perhaps he might not mean what he ſaid.' JOHNSON. 'Nay, Sir, if he lied it is a different thing.' Colman ſlily ſaid, (but it is believed Dr. Johnſon did not hear him,) 'Then the proper expreſſion ſhould have been—Sir, if you don't lie, you're a raſcal."

"His affection for Topham Beauclerk was ſo great, that when Beauclerk was labouring under that ſevere illneſs which at laſt occaſioned his death, Johnſon ſaid, (with a voice faultering with emotion) 'Sir, I would walk to the extent of the diameter of the earth, to ſave Beauclerk."

"One night at the CLUB he produced a tranſlation of an epitaph which Lord Ellibank had written in Engliſh for his lady, and requeſted of

of Johnſon to turn into Latin for him. Having read *Domina de North et Gray*, he ſaid to Dyer, 'You ſee, Sir, what barbariſms we are compelled to make uſe of, when modern titles are to be ſpecifically mentioned in Latin inſcriptions.' When he had read it once aloud, and there had been a general approbation expreſſed by the company, he addreſſed himſelf to Mr. Dyer in particular, and ſaid, 'Sir, I beg to have your judgment, for I know your nicety.' Dyer then very properly deſired to read it over again; which, having done, he pointed out an incongruity in one of the ſentences. Johnſon immediately aſſented to the obſervation, and ſaid, Sir, this is owing to an alteration of a part of the ſentence, from the form in which I had firſt written it; and I believe, Sir, you may have remarked, that it is a very frequent cauſe of errour in compoſition, when one has made a partial change, without a due regard to the general ſtructure of the ſentence." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Johnſon was well acquainted with Mr. Doſſie, authour of a treatiſe on Agriculture; and ſaid of him, 'Sir, of the objects which the Society of Arts have chiefly in view, the chymical effects of bodies operating upon other bodies, he knows more than almoſt any man.' Johnſon, in order to give Mr. Doſſie his vote to be a member of this ſociety, paid up an arrear which he had run on for two years. On this occaſion he mentioned a circumſtance, as characteriſt of the Scotch, 'One of that nation, (ſaid he) who had been a candidate, againſt whom I had voted, came up to me with a civil ſalutation. Now, Sir, this is their way. An Engliſhman would have ſtomached it, and been ſulky, and never have taken farther notice of you: but a Scotchman, Sir, though you vote

nineteen

1780. Ætat. 71. nineteen times againſt him, will accoſt you with equal complaiſance after each time, and the twentieth time, Sir, he will get your vote."

"Talking on the ſubject of toleration, one day when ſome friends were with him in his ſtudy, he made his uſual remark, that the ſtate has a right to regulate the religion of the people, who are the children of the ſtate. A clergyman having readily acquieſced in this, Johnſon, who loved diſcuſſion, obſerved, 'But, Sir, you muſt go round to other ſtates than our own. You do not know what a Bramin has to ſay for himſelf. In ſhort, Sir, I have got no farther than this. Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdom is the teſt."

"A man, he obſerved, ſhould begin to write ſoon; for, if he waits till his judgment is matured, his inability, through want of practice to expreſs his conceptions, will make the diſproportion ſo great between what he ſees, and what he can attain, that he will probably be diſcouraged from writing at all. As a proof of the juſtneſs of this remark, we may inſtance what is related of the great Lord Granville; that after he had written his letter, giving an account of the battle of Dettingen, he ſaid, 'Here is a letter, expreſſed in terms not good enough for a tallow-chandler to have uſed."

"Talking of a Court-martial that was ſitting upon a very momentous public occaſion, he expreſſed much doubt of an enlightened deciſion; and ſaid, that perhaps there was not a member of it, who in the whole courſe of his life, had ever ſpent an hour by himſelf in balancing probabilities."

"Goldſmith one day brought to the Club a printed Ode, which he, with others, had been hearing

hearing read by its authour in a public room, at the rate of five ſhillings each for admiſſion. One of the company having read it aloud, Dr. Johnſon ſaid, 'Bolder words, and more timorous meaning, I think never were brought together." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Talking of Gray's Odes, he ſaid, 'They are forced plants, raiſed in a hot-bed; and they are poor plants; they are but cucumbers after all.' A gentleman preſent, who had been running down ode-writing in general, as a bad ſpecies of poetry, unluckily ſaid, 'Had they been literally cucumbers, they had been better things than odes.'—'Yes, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) for a *hog*."

"His diſtinction of the different degrees of attainment of learning, was thus marked upon two occaſions. Of Queen Elizabeth he ſaid, 'She had learning enough to have given dignity to a biſhop;' and of Mr. Thomas Davies he ſaid, 'Sir, Davies has learning enough to give credit to a clergyman."

"He uſed to quote, with great warmth, the ſaying of Ariſtotle recorded by Diogenes Laertius; that there was the ſame difference between one learned and unlearned, as between the living and the dead."

"It is very remarkable, that he retained in his memory very ſlight and trivial, as well as important things. As an inſtance of this, it ſeems that an inferiour domeſtick of the Duke of Leeds had attempted to celebrate his Grace's marriage in ſuch homely rhymes as he could make; and this curious compoſition having been ſung to Dr. Johnſon he got it by heart, and uſed to repeat it in a very pleaſant manner. Two of the ſtanzas were theſe:

'When

1780. Ætat. 71.

'When the Duke of Leeds ſhall married be
'To a fine young lady of high quality,
'How happy will that gentlewoman be
'In his Grace of Leeds's good company.

'She ſhall have all that's fine and fair,
'And the beſt of ſilk and ſattin ſhall wear;
'And ride in a coach to take the air,
'And have a houſe in St. James's-ſquare.'

To hear a man, of the weight and dignity of Johnſon, repeating ſuch humble attempts at poetry, had a very amuſing effect. He, however, ſeriouſly obſerved of the laſt ſtanza, that it nearly comprized all the advantages that wealth can give.

"An eminent foreigner, when he was ſhewn the Britiſh Muſeum, was very troubleſome with many abſurd enquiries. 'Now there, Sir, (ſaid he,) is the difference between an Engliſhman and a Frenchman. A Frenchman muſt be always talking, whether he knows any thing of the matter or not; an Engliſhman is content to ſay nothing, when he has nothing to ſay."

"His unjuſt contempt for foreigners was, indeed, extreme. One evening, at Old Slaughter's coffee-houſe, when a number of them were talking loud about little matters, he ſaid, 'Does not this confirm old Meynell's obſervation—For any thing I ſee, foreigners are fools."

"He ſaid that once, when he had a violent tooth-ache, a French-man accoſted him thus: *Ah, Monſieur, vous etudiez trop.*"

"Having ſpent an evening at Mr. Langton's, with the Reverend Dr. Parr, he was much pleaſed with the converſation of that learned gentleman; and after he was gone, ſaid to Mr. Langton, 'Sir, I am obliged to you for having aſked me this evening. Parr is a fair man. I do

do not know when I have had an occaſion of ſuch free controverſy. It is remarkable how much of a man's life may paſs without meeting with any inſtance of this kind of open diſcuſſion. 1780. Ætat. 71.

"We may fairly inſtitute a criticiſm between Shakſpeare and Corneille, as they both had, though in a different degree, the lights of a latter age. It is not ſo juſt between the Greek dramatick writers and Shakſpeare. It may be replied to what is ſaid by one of the remarkers on Shakſpeare, that though Darius's ſhade had *preſcience*, it does not neceſſarily follow that he had all *paſt* particulars revealed to him."

"Spaniſh plays, being wildly and improbably farcical, would pleaſe children here, as children are entertained with ſtories full of prodigies; their experience not being ſufficient to cauſe them to be ſo readily ſtartled at deviations from the natural courſe of life. The machinery of the Pagans is unintereſting to us: when a Goddeſs appears in Homer or Virgil, we grow weary; ſtill more ſo in the Grecian tragedies, as in that kind of compoſition a nearer approach to nature is intended. Yet there are good reaſons for reading romances; as the fertility of invention, the beauty of ſtyle, and expreſſion, the curioſity of ſeeing with what kind of performances the age and country in which they were written was delighted: for it is to be apprehended, that at the time when very wild improbable tales were well received, the people were in a barbarous ſtate, and ſo on the footing of children, as has been explained."

"It is evident enough that no one who writes now can uſe the Pagan deities and mythology; the only machinery, therefore, ſeems that of miniſtring ſpirits, the ghoſts of the departed, witches

1780. witches and fairies, though theſe latter, as the vulgar ſuperſtition concerning them (which, while in its force, infected at leaſt the imagination of thoſe that had more advantage in education, and only their reaſon ſet them free from it,) is every day wearing out, ſeem likely to be of little further aſſiſtance in the machinery of poetry. As I recollect Hammond introduces a hag or witch into one of his love elegies, where the effect is unmeaning and diſguſting."

Ætat. 71.

"The man who uſes his talent of ridicule in creating or groſsly exaggerating the inſtances he gives, who imputes abſurdities that did not happen, or when a man was a little ridiculous, deſcribes him as having been very much ſo, abuſes his talents greatly. The great uſe of delineating abſurdities is, that we may know how far human folly can go; the account, therefore, ought of abſolute neceſſity to be faithful. A certain character (naming the perſon) as to the general caſt of it, is well deſcribed by Garrick, but a great deal of the phraſeology he uſes in it, is quite his own, particularly in the proverbial compariſons, 'obſtinate as a pig,' &c. but I don't know whether it might not be true of him, that from a too great eagerneſs for praiſe and popularity, and a politeneſs carried to a ridiculous exceſs, he was likely, after aſſerting a thing in general, to give it up again in parts. For inſtance, if he had ſaid Reynolds was the firſt of painters, he was capable enough of giving up, as objections might happen to be ſeverally made; firſt, his outline—then the grace in form—then the colouring—and laſtly, to have owned that he was ſuch a manneriſt, that the diſpoſition of his pictures was all alike."

"For hoſpitality, as formerly practiſed, there is no longer the ſame reaſon; heretofore the poorer

poorer people were more numerous, and from want of commerce, their means of getting a livelihood more difficult; therefore the ſupporting them was an act of great benevolence; now the poor can find maintenance for themſelves and their labour is wanted, a general undiſcerning hoſpitality tends to ill, by withdrawing them from their work to idleneſs and drunkenneſs. Then formerly rents were received in kind, ſo that there was a great abundance of proviſions in poſſeſſion of the owners of the lands, which ſince the plenty of money afforded by commerce is no longer the caſe." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Hoſpitality to ſtrangers and foreigners in our country is now almoſt at an end, ſince from the increaſe of them that come to us, there have been a ſufficient number of people that have found an intereſt in providing inns and proper accommodations, which is in general a more expedient method for the entertainment of travellers. Where the travellers and ſtrangers are few, more of that hoſpitality ſubſiſts, as it has not been worth while to provide places of accommodation. In Ireland there is ſtill hoſpitality to ſtrangers, in ſome degree; in Hungary and Poland probably more."

"Colman, in a note on his tranſlation of Terence, talking of Shakſpeare's learning, aſks, 'What ſays Farmer to this? What ſays Johnſon?' Upon this he obſerved, 'Sir, let Farmer anſwer for himſelf: *I* never engaged in this controverſy. I always ſaid, Shakſpeare had Latin enough to gramatticiſe his Engliſh.'"

"A clergyman, whom he characteriſed as one who loved to ſay little oddities, was affecting one day, at a Biſhop's table, a ſort of flyneſs and freedom not in character, and repeated,

as,

1780. Ætat. 71. as if part of 'The Old Man's Wiſh,' a ſong by Dr. Walter Pope, a verſe bordering on licentiouſneſs. Johnſon rebuked him in the fineſt manner, by firſt ſhewing him that he did not know the paſſage he was aiming at, and thus humbling him: 'Sir, that is not the ſong: it is thus.' And he gave it right. Then looking ſtedfaſtly on him, 'Sir, there is a part of that ſong which I would wiſh to exemplify in my own life:

'May I govern my paſſions with abſolute ſway.'

"Being aſked if Barnes knew a good deal of Greek, he anſwered, 'I doubt, Sir, he was *unoculus inter cæcos*."

"He uſed frequently to obſerve, that men might be very eminent in a profeſſion, without our perceiving any particular power of mind in them in converſation. 'It ſeems ſtrange (ſaid he,) that a man ſhould ſee ſo far to the right, who ſees ſo ſhort a way to the left. Burke is the only man whoſe common converſation correſponds with the general fame which he had in the world. Take up whatever topick you pleaſe, he is ready to meet you."

"A gentleman, by no means deficient in literature, having diſcovered leſs acquaintance with one of the Claſſicks than Johnſon expected, when the gentleman left the room he obſerved, 'You ſee, now, how little any body reads.' Mr. Langton happening to mention his having read a good deal in Clinardus's Greek Grammar, 'Why, Sir, (ſaid he,) who is there in this town knows any thing of Clinardus but you and I?' And upon Mr. Langton's mentioning that he had taken the pains to learn by heart the epiſtle of St. Baſil, which is given in that Grammar,

Grammar as a praxis, 'Sir, (ſaid he,) I never made ſuch an effort to attain Greek." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Of Dodſley's 'Publick Virtue: a Poem,' he ſaid, 'It was fine *blank*; (meaning to expreſs his uſual contempt for blank verſe): however, this miſerable poem did not ſell, and my poor friend Doddy ſaid, Publick Virtue was not a ſubject to intereſt the age."

"Mr. Langton, when a very young man, read Dodſley's 'Cleone: a Tragedy,' to him, not aware of his extreme impatience to be read to. As it went on he turned his face to the back of his chair, and put himſelf into various attitudes, which marked his uneaſineſs. At the end of an act, however, he ſaid, 'Come let's have ſome more, let's go into the ſlaughter-houſe again, Lanky. But I am afraid there is more blood than brains.' Yet he afterwards ſaid, 'When I heard you read it, I thought higher of its power of language. When I read it myſelf, I was more ſenſible of its pathetick effect,' and then paid it a compliment which many will think very extravagant. 'Sir, (ſaid he,) if Otway had written this play, no other of his pieces would have been remembered.' Dodſley himſelf, upon this being repeated to him, ſaid, 'It was too much:' it muſt be remembered, that Johnſon always appeared not to be ſufficiently ſenſible of the merit of Otway."

"Snatches of reading (ſaid he) will not make a Bentley or a Clarke. They are, however, in a certain degree advantageous. I would put a child into a library (where no unfit books are) and let him read at his choice. A child ſhould not be diſcouraged from reading any thing that he takes a liking to, from a notion that it is above his reach. If that be the caſe,

1780. Ætat. 71. the child will ſoon find it out and deſiſt; if not, he of courſe gains the inſtruction; which is ſo much the more likely to come, from the inclination with which he takes up the ſtudy."

"Though he uſed to cenſure careleſſneſs with great vehemence, he owned, that he once, to avoid the trouble of locking up five guineas, hid them, he forgot where, ſo that he could not find them."

"A gentleman who introduced his brother to Dr. Johnſon, was earneſt to recommend him to the Doctor's notice, which he did by ſaying, 'When we have ſat together ſome time, you'll find my brother grow very entertaining.'—'Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) I can wait."

"When the rumour was ſtrong that we ſhould have a war, becauſe the French would aſſiſt the Americans; he rebuked a friend with ſome aſperity for ſuppoſing it, ſaying, 'No, Sir, national faith is not yet ſunk ſo low."

"In the latter part of his life, in order to ſatisfy himſelf whether his mental faculties were impaired, he reſolved that he would try to learn a new language, and fixed upon the low Dutch, for that purpoſe, and this he continued till he had read about one half of 'Thomas à Kempis;' and finding that there appeared no abatement of his power of acquiſition, he then deſiſted, as thinking the experiment had been duely tried. Mr. Burke juſtly obſerved, that this was not the moſt vigorous trial, Low Dutch being a language ſo near to our own; had it been one of the languages entirely different, he might have been very ſoon ſatisfied."

"Mr. Langton and he having gone to ſee a Freemaſon's funeral proceſſion, when they were at Rocheſter, and ſome ſolemn muſick being played on French-horns, he ſaid, 'This is the

the firſt time that I have ever been affected by muſical ſounds:' adding, 'that the impreſſion made upon him was of a melancholy kind.'— Mr. Langton ſaying, that this effect was a fine one. JOHNSON. 'Yes, if it ſoftens the mind ſo as to prepare it for the reception of ſalutary feelings, it may be good. But inaſmuch as it is melancholy *per ſe*, it is bad." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Goldſmith had long a viſionary project, that ſome time or other when his circumſtances ſhould be eaſier, he would go to Aleppo, in order to acquire a knowledge as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the Eaſt, and introduce them into Britain. When this was talked of in Dr. Johnſon's company, he ſaid, 'Of all men Goldſmith is the moſt unfit to go out upon ſuch an inquiry, for he is utterly ignorant of ſuch arts as we already poſſeſs, and conſequently could not know what would be acceſſions to our preſent ſtock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding-barrow, which you ſee in every ſtreet in London, and think that he had furniſhed a wonderful improvement."

"Greek, Sir, (ſaid he,) is like lace; every man gets as much of it as he can."

"When Lord Charles Hay, after his return from America, was preparing his defence to be offered to the Court-Martial which he had demanded, having heard Mr. Langton as high in his expreſſions of admiration of Johnſon as he uſually was, he requeſted that Dr. Johnſon might be introduced to him; and Mr. Langton having mentioned it to Johnſon, he very kindly and readily agreed; and being preſented to his Lordſhip, while under arreſt, by Mr. Langton, he ſaw him ſeveral times; upon one of which occaſions Lord Charles read to him what he had prepared, which Johnſon ſignified his approbation of,

1780. Ætat. 71. saying, 'It is a very good ſoldierly defence.'—Johnſon ſaid, that he had adviſed his Lordſhip, that as it was in vain to contend with thoſe who were in poſſeſſion of power, if they would offer him the rank of Lieutenant-General, and a government, it would be better judged to deſiſt from urging his complaints. It is well known that his Lordſhip died before the trial came on."

"Johnſon one day gave high praiſe to Dr. Bentley's verſes* in Dodſley's Collection, which he recited with his uſual energy. Dr. Adam Smith,

* Dr. Johnſon, in his life of Cowley, ſays; that theſe are "the only Engliſh verſes which Bentley is known ever to have written." I ſhall here inſert them, and hope my readers will apply them.

"Who ſtrives to mount Parnaſſus' hill,
"And thence poetick laurels bring,
"Muſt firſt acquire due force and ſkill,
"Muſt fly with ſwan's or eagle's wing.

"Who Nature's treaſures would explore,
"Her myſteries and arcana know;
"Muſt high as lofty Newton ſoar,
"Muſt ſtoop as delving Woodward low.

"Who ſtudies ancient laws and rites,
"Tongues, arts, and arms, and hiſtory;
"Muſt drudge, like Seldon, days and nights,
"And in the endleſs labour die.

"Who travels in religious jars,
"(Truth mixt with errour, ſhades with rays);
"Like Whiſton, wanting pyx or ſtars,
"In ocean wide, or ſinks or ſtrays,

"But grant our hero's hope, long toil
"And comprehenſive genius crown,
"All ſciences, all arts his ſpoil,
"Yet what reward, or what renown?

"Envy,

Smith, who was preſent, obſerved in his deciſive profeſſorial manner, 'Very well—Very well.' Johnſon however added, 'Yes, they *are* very well, Sir, but you may obſerve in what manner they are well. They are the forcible verſes of a man of a ſtrong mind, but not accuſtomed to write verſe; for there is ſome uncouthneſs in the expreſſion." 1780. Ætat. 71.

"Drinking tea one day at Garrick's with Mr. Langton, he was queſtioned if he was not ſomewhat of a heretick as to Shakſpeare, ſaid Garrick, 'I doubt he is a little of an infidel'—'Sir (ſaid Johnſon,) I will ſtand by the lines I have written on Shakſpeare, in my Prologue at the opening of your theatre.' Mr. Langton ſuggeſted, that in the line

'And panting Time toil'd after him in vain;'

Johnſon might have had in his eye the paſſage in the 'Tempeſt,' where Proſpero ſays of Miranda,

'——— She will outſtrip all praiſe,
'And make it halt behind her.'

"Envy, innate in vulgar ſouls,
"Envy ſteps in and ſtops his riſe,
"Envy with poiſon'd tarniſh ſouls
"His luſtre and his worth decries.

"He lives inglorious or in want,
"To College and old books confin'd;
"Inſtead of learn'd he's call'd pedant,
"Dunces advanc'd, he's left behind:
"Yet left content a genuine Stoick he,
"Great without patron, rich without South Sea."

Johnſon

1780. Ætat. 71. Johnſon ſaid nothing. Garrick then ventured to obſerve, 'I do not think that the happieſt line in the praiſe of Shakſpeare.' Johnſon exclaimed (ſmiling) 'Proſaical rogues; next time I write, I'll make both time and ſpace pant*.'

"It is well known that there was formerly a rude cuſtom for thoſe who were ſailing upon the Thames, to accoſt each other as they paſſed in the moſt abuſive language they could invent, generally, however, with as much ſatirical humour as they were capable of producing. Addiſon gives a ſpecimen of this ribaldry, in Number 383 of 'The Spectator,' when Sir Roger de Coverly and he are going to Spring-garden.—Johnſon was once eminently ſucceſsful in this ſpecies of conteſt; a fellow having attacked him with ſome coarſe raillery, Johnſon anſwered thus, 'Sir, your wife (under pretence of keeping a bawdy-houſe) is a receiver of ſtolen goods.' One evening when he and Mr. Burke, and Mr. Langton were in company together, and the

* I am ſorry to ſee in the "Tranſactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh," Vol. II. "An Eſſay on the character of Hamlet," written, I ſhould ſuppoſe, by a very young man, though called "Reverend;" who ſpeaks with preſumptuous petulance of the firſt literary character of his age. Amidſt a cloudy confuſion of words, (which hath of late too often paſſed in Scotland for *Metaphyſicks*,) he thus ventures to criticiſe one of the nobleſt lines in our language:—"Dr. Johnſon has remarked, that 'time toil'd after him in vain.' But I ſhould apprehend, that this is *entirely to miſtake the character*. Time toils after *every great man*, as well as after Shakſpeare. The *workings* of an ordinary mind *keep pace*, indeed, with time; they move no faſter; *they have their beginning, their middle, and their end*; but ſuperiour natures can *reduce theſe into a point*.—They do not, indeed, *ſuppreſs* them; but they *ſuſpend*, or they *lock them up in the breaſt*." The learned Society, under whoſe ſanction ſuch gabble is uſhered into the world, would do well to offer a premium to any one who will diſcover its meaning.

admirable

admirable ſcolding of Timon of Athens was mentioned, this inſtance of Johnſon's was quoted and thought to have at leaſt equal excellence. 1780. Ætat. 71.

" As Johnſon always allowed the extraordinary talents of Mr. Burke, ſo Mr. Burke was fully ſenſible of the wonderful powers of Johnſon. Mr. Langton recollects having paſſed an evening with both of them, when Mr. Burke repeatedly entered upon topicks which it was evident he would have illuſtrated with extenſive knowledge and richneſs of expreſſion; but Johnſon always ſeiſed upon the converſation, in which, however, he acquitted himſelf in a moſt maſterly manner. As Mr. Burke and Mr. Langton were walking home, Mr. Burke obſerved that Johnſon had been very great that night; Mr. Langton joined in this, but added, he could have wiſhed to hear more from another perſon; (plainly intimating that he meant Mr. Burke). 'O, no, (ſaid Mr. Burke) it is enough for me to have rung the bell to him."

" Talking of Dr. Blagden's copiouſneſs and preciſion of communication, Dr. Johnſon ſaid, 'Blagden, Sir, is a delightful fellow."

This year the Reverend Dr. Franklin having publiſhed a tranſlation of " Lucian," inſcribed to him the *Demonax* thus:

" To Dr. Samuel Johnson, the Demonax of the preſent age, this piece is inſcribed by a ſincere admirer of his reſpectable talents,

" The Translator."

Though upon a particular compariſon of Demonax and Johnſon, there does not ſeem to be a great deal of ſimilarity between them; this Dedication is a juſt compliment from the general character given by Lucian of the ancient Sage, " the beſt philoſopher whom I have ever ſeen or known."

In

1781. Ætat. 72. In 1781 Johnſon at laſt completed his "Lives of the Poets," of which he gives this account: "Sometime in March I finiſhed the 'Lives of the Poets,' which I wrote in my uſual way, dilatorily and haſtily, unwilling to work, and working with vigour and haſte*." In a memorandum previous to this, he ſays of them:—"Written I hope, in ſuch a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety†."

This is the work which of all Dr. Johnſon's writings will perhaps be read moſt generally, and with moſt pleaſure. Philology and biography were his favourite purſuits, and thoſe who lived moſt in intimacy with him, heard him upon all occaſions, when there was a proper opportunity, take delight in expatiating upon the various merits of the Engliſh Poets; upon the niceties of their characters, and the events of their progreſs thro' the world which they contributed to illuminate. His mind was ſo full of that kind of information, and it was ſo well arranged in his memory, that in performing what he had undertaken in this way, he had little more to do than to put his thoughts upon paper, exhibiting firſt each Poet's life, and then ſubjoining a critical examination of his genius and works. But when he began to write, the ſubject ſwelled in ſuch a manner, that inſtead of prefaces to each Poet of no more than a few pages as he had originally intended‡, he produced an ample, rich

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 190. † Ibid. 174.

‡ His deſign is thus announced in his *Adverti ſement*:—"The Booksellers having determined to publiſh a body of Engliſh Poetry, I was perſuaded to promiſe them a preface to the works of each authour; an undertaking, as it was then preſented to my mind, not very tedious or difficult.

"My

rich and moſt entertaining view of them in every reſpect. In this he reſembled Quintilian, who tells us, that in the compoſition of his Inſtitutions of Oratory, "*Latiùs ſe tamen aperiente materia, plus quàm imponebatur oneris ſponte ſuſcepi.*" The booksellers juſtly ſenſible of the great additional value of the copy-right, preſented him with another hundred pounds, over and above two hundred, for which his agreement was to furniſh ſuch prefaces as he thought fit. 1781. Ætat. 72.

This was, however, but a ſmall recompence for ſuch a collection of biography, and ſuch principles and illuſtrations of criticiſm as, if digeſted and arranged in one ſyſtem by ſome modern Ariſtotle or Longinus, might form a code upon that ſubject, ſuch as no other nation can ſhew. As he was ſo good as to make me a preſent of the greateſt part of the original, and indeed only manuſcript of this admirable work, I have an opportunity of obſerving with wonder the correctneſs with which he rapidly ſtruck off ſuch glowing compoſition. He may be aſſimilated to the Lady in Waller, who could impreſs with "Love at firſt ſight:"

"Some other nymphs with colours faint,
"And pencil ſlow may Cupid paint,
"And a weak heart in time deſtroy;
"She has a ſtamp and prints the boy."

That he, however, had a good deal of trouble and ſome anxiety in carrying on the work,

"My purpoſe was only to have allotted to every poet an Advertiſement, like that which we find in the French Miſcellanies, containing a few dates, and a general character; but I have been led beyond my intention, I hope by the honeſt deſire of giving uſeful pleaſure.

1781. Ætat. 72. we ſee from a ſeries of his notes to Mr. Nicols, the printer*, whoſe variety of literary inquiry

* Thus:—"In the Life of Waller, Mr. Nicols will find a reference to Parliamentary Hiſtory, from which a long quotation is to be inſerted. If Mr. Nicols cannot eaſily find the book, Mr. Johnſon will ſend it from Streatham."

"Clarendon is here returned."

"by ſome accident, I laid *your* note upon Duke up ſo ſafely, that I cannot find it. Your informations have been of great uſe to me. I muſt beg it again; with another liſt of our authours, for I have laid that with the other. I have ſent Stepney's Epitaph. Let me have the reviſes as ſoon as can be. Dec. 1778.

"I have ſent Philips, with his Epitaph, to be inſerted. The fragment of a Preface is hardly worth the impreſſion, but that we may ſeem to do ſomething. It may be added to the Life of Philips. The Latin page is to be added to the Life of Smith. I ſhall be at home, to reviſe the two ſheets of Milton. March 1, 1779."

"Pleaſe to get me the laſt edition of Hughes's Letters; and try to get Dennis upon Blackmore, and upon Cato, and any thing of the ſame writer againſt Pope. Our materials are defective."

"As Waller profeſſed to have imitated Fairfax, do you think a few pages of Fairfax would enrich our edition?—Few readers have ſeen it, and it may pleaſe them. But it is not neceſſary."

"An account of the Lives and Works of ſome of the moſt eminent Engliſh Poets. By, &c.—'The Engliſh Poets, biographically and critically conſidered. by SAM. JOHNSON.'——Let Mr. Nicols take his choice, or make another to his mind. May, 1781."

"You ſomehow forgot the advertiſement for the new edition. It was not incloſed. Of Gay's Letters I ſee not that any uſe can be made, for they give no information of any thing. That he was a member of the Philoſophical Society is ſomething; but ſurely he could be but a correſponding member. However, not having his Life here, I know not how to put it in, and it is of little importance."

See ſeveral more in "The Gentleman's Magazine, 1785. The Editor of that Miſcellany, in which Johnſon wrote for ſeveral years, ſeem juſtly to think that every fragment of ſo great a man is worthy of being preſerved.

and

and obliging diſpoſition, rendered him very uſeful to Johnſon. Mr. Stephens appears, from the papers in my poſſeſſion, to have ſupplied him with ſome anecdotes and quotations; and I obſerve the fair hand of Mrs. Thrale as one of his copyiſts of ſelect paſſages. 1781. Ætat. 72.

It is not my intention to dwell upon each of Johnſon's "Lives of the Poets," or attempt an analyſis of their merits, which were I able to do it, would take up too much room in this work; yet I ſhall make a few obſervations upon ſome of them, and inſert a few various readings.

The Life of Cowley he himſelf conſidered as the beſt of the whole, on account of the diſſertation which it contains on the *Metaphyſical Poets*. Dryden, whoſe critical abilities were equal to his poetical, had mentioned them in his excellent Dedication of his Juvenal, but had barely mentioned them. Johnſon has exhibited them at large, with ſuch happy illuſtration from their writings, and in ſo luminous a manner, that indeed he may be allowed the full merit of novelty, and to have diſcovered to us as it were, a new planet in the political hemiſphere.

It is remarked by Johnſon, in conſidering the words of a poet*, that "amendments are ſeldom made without ſome token of a rent;" but I do not find that this is applicable to proſe.—We ſhall ſee that though his amendments in this work are for the better, there is nothing of the *pannus aſſutus*; the texture is uniform, and indeed what has been there at firſt, is very ſeldom unfit to have remained.

* Life of Sheffield.

Various

1781. *Various readings* in the Life of* COWLEY.

Ætat. 72.

"All [future votaries of] *that may hereafter pant for* ſolitude.

"To conceive and execute the [agitation or perception] *pains and the pleaſures* of other minds.

"The wide effulgence of [the blazing] *a ſummer* noon."

In the Life of WALLER, Johnſon gives a diſtinct and animated narrative of publick affairs in that variegated period, with ſtrong yet nice touches of character, and having a fair opportunity to diſplay his political principles, does it with an unqualified manly confidence, and ſatisfies his readers how nobly he might have executed a *Tory hiſtory* of his country.

So eaſy is his ſtile in theſe Lives, that I do not recollect more than three uncommon or learned words; one, when giving an account of the approach of Waller's mortal diſeaſe, he ſays, "he found his legs grow *tumid*;" by uſing the expreſſion his legs *ſwelled*, he would have avoided this; and there would have been no impropriety in its being followed by the intereſting queſtion to his phyſician, "What that *ſwelling* meant?" Another, when he mentions that Pope had *emitted* propoſals; when *publiſhed* or *iſſued*, would have been more readily underſtood; and a third, when he calls Orrery and Dr. Delany, writers undoubtedly *veracious*; when *true*, *honeſt*, or *faithful*, might have been uſed. Yet, it muſt be owned, that none of theſe are *hard* or *too big* words; that cuſtom would make them ſeem as eaſy as any others; and that a lan-

* The original reading is encloſed in brackets, and the preſent one is printed in Italicks.

guage

guage is richer and capable of more beauty of expreſſion, by having a greater variety of ſynonimes. 1781. Ætat. 72.

His diſſertation upon the unfitneſs of poetry for the aweful ſubjects of our holy religion, tho' I do not entirely agree with him, has all the merit of originality, with uncommon force of reaſoning.

Various readings in the Life of WALLER.

"Conſented to [the inſertion of their names] *their own nomination.*

"[After] *paying* a fine of ten thouſand pounds.

"Congratulating Charles the Second on his [coronation] *recovered right.*

"He that has flattery ready for all whom the viciſſitudes of the world happen to exalt, muſt be [confeſſed to degrade his powers] *ſcorned as a proſtituted mind.*

"The characters by which Waller intended to diſtinguiſh his writings are [elegance] *ſprightlineſs* and dignity.

"Bloſſoms to be valued only as they [fetch] *foretell* fruits.

"Images ſuch as the ſuperficies of nature [eaſily] *readily* ſupplies.

"[His] *Some* applications [are ſometimes] *may be thought* too remote and unconſequential.

"His images are [ſometimes confuſed] *not always diſtinct.*"

Againſt his Life of MILTON, the hounds of Whiggiſm have opened in full cry. But of Milton's great excellence as a poet, where ſhall we find ſuch a blazon as by the hand of Johnſon? I ſhall ſelect only the following paſſage concerning "*Paradiſe Loſt:*"

"Fancy

1781. Ætat. 72. "Fancy can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton ſurveyed the ſilent progreſs of his work, and marked his reputation ſtealing its way in a kind of ſubterraneous current, through fear and ſilence. I cannot but conceive him calm and confident, little diſappointed, not at all dejected, relying on his own merit with ſteady conſciouſneſs, and waiting without impatience, the viciſſitudes of opinion, and the impartiality of a future generation."

Indeed even Dr. Towers, who may be conſidered as one of the warmeſt zealots of *The Revolution Society* itſelf, allows, that "Johnſon has ſpoken in the higheſt terms of the abilities of that great poet, and has beſtowed on his principal poetical compoſitions, the moſt honourable encomiums*."

That a man, who venerated the Church and Monarchy as Johnſon did, ſhould ſpeak with

* See "An Eſſay on the Life, Character, and Writings of Dr. Samuel Johnſon," London, 1787; which is very well written, making a proper allowance for the democratical bigotry of its authour; who I cannot however but admire for his liberality in ſpeaking thus of my illuſtrious friend:

"He poſſeſſed extraordinary powers of underſtanding, which were much cultivated by ſtudy, and ſtill more by meditation and reflection. His memory was remarkably retentive, his imagination uncommonly vigorous, and his judgement keen and penetrating. He had a ſtrong ſenſe of the importance of religion; his piety was ſincere, and ſometimes ardent; and his zeal for the intereſts of virtue was often manifeſted in his converſation and in his writings. The ſame energy which was diſplayed in his literary production was exhibited alſo in his converſation, which was various, ſtriking, and inſtructive; and perhaps no man ever equalled him for nervous and pointed repartees.

"His Dictionary, his moral Eſſays, and his productions in polite literature, will convey uſeful inſtruction, and elegant entertainment, as long as the language in which they are written ſhall be underſtood."

a juſt

a juſt abhorrence of Milton as a politician, or rather as daring foe to good polity, was ſurely to be expected; and to thoſe who cenſure him, I would recommend his commentary on Milton's celebrated complaint of his ſituation, when by the lenity of Charles the Second, "A lenity of which (as Johnſon well obſerves) the world has had perhaps no other example; he, who had written in juſtification of the murder of his Sovereign, was ſafe under an *Act of Oblivion*." No ſooner is he ſafe than he finds himſelf in danger, *fallen on evil days and evil tongues, and with darkneſs and with danger compaſs'd round*. This darkneſs, had his eyes been better employed, had undoubtedly deſerved compaſſion; but to add the mention of danger was ungrateful and unjuſt. He was fallen, indeed, on *evil days*; the time was come in which regicides could no longer boaſt their wickedneſs. But of *evil tongues* to complain, required impudence at leaſt equal to his other powers: Milton, whoſe warmeſt advocates muſt allow, "that he never ſpared any aſperity of reproach, or brutality of inſolence." 1781. Ætat. 72.

I have, indeed, often wondered how Milton, "an acrimonious and ſurly Republican," a man "who in his domeſtick relations was ſo ſevere and arbitrary," and whoſe head was filled with the hardeſt and moſt diſmal tenets of Calviniſm, ſhould have been ſuch a poet; ſhould not only have written with ſublimity, but with beauty, and even gayety; ſhould have exquiſitely painted the ſweeteſt ſenſations of which our nature is capable; imaged the delicate raptures of connubial love; nay, ſeemed to be animated with all the ſpirit of revelry. It is a proof that in the human mind the departments of judgement and imagination, perception and temper, may ſometimes be divided by ſtrong partitions; and that

1781. Ætat. 72. that the light and ſhade in the ſame character may be kept ſo diſtinct as never to be blended.

In the Life of Milton, Johnſon took occaſion to maintain his own and the general opinion of the excellence of rhyme over blank verſe, in Engliſh poetry, and quotes this oppoſite illuſtration of it by "an ingenious critick," that *it ſeems to be verſe only to the eye**. The gentleman whom he thus characteriſes is (as he told Mr. Seward) Mr. Lock, of Norbury Park in Surrey, whoſe knowledge and taſte in the fine arts is univerſally celebrated; with whoſe elegance of manners the writer of the preſent work has felt himſelf much impreſſed, and to whoſe virtues a common friend, who has known him long, and is not much addicted to flattery, gives the higheſt teſtimony.

Various readings in the Life of MILTON.

"I cannot find any meaning but this which [his moſt bigotted advocates] *even kindneſs and reverence* can give.

"[Perhaps no] *ſcarcely any* man ever wrote ſo much, and praiſed ſo few.

"A certain [reſcue] *preſervative* from oblivion.

"Let me not be cenſured for this digreſſion, as [contracted] *pedantick* or paradoxical.

"Socrates rather was of opinion, that what we had to learn was how to [obtain and communicate happineſs] *do good and avoid evil.*

* One of the moſt natural inſtances of the effect of blank verſe happened to the late Earl of Hopeton. His Lordſhip obſerved one of his ſhepherds poring in the fields upon Milton's "Paradiſe Loſt;" and having aſked him what book it was, the man anſwered, "An't pleaſe your Lordſhip this is a very odd ſort of an authour: he would fain rhyme, but cannot get at it."

"Its

" Its elegance [who can exhibit?] *is leſs attainable.*" 1781. Ætat. 72.

I could, with pleaſure, expatiate upon the maſterly execution of the Life of DRYDEN, which we have ſeen was one of Johnſon's literary projects at an early period, and which it is remarkable, that after deſiſting from it, from a ſuppoſed ſcantineſs of materials, he ſhould, at an advanced age, have performed ſo amply.

His defence of that great poet againſt the illiberal attacks upon him, as if his embracing the Roman Catholick communion had been a time-ſerving meaſure, is a piece of reaſoning at once able and candid. Indeed, Dryden himſelf, in his "Hind and Panther," hath given ſuch a picture of his mind, that they who know the anxiety for repoſe as to the aweful ſubject of our ſtate beyond the grave, though they may think his opinion ill-founded, muſt think charitably of his ſentiment.

" But, gracious GOD, how well doſt thou provide
" For erring judgements an unerring guide!
" Thy throne is darkneſs in th' abyſs of light,
" A blaze of glory that forbids the ſight.
" O! teach me to believe thee thus conceal'd,
" And ſearch no farther than thyſelf reveal'd;
" But Her alone for my director take,
" Whom thou haſt promis'd never to forſake.
" My thoughtleſs youth was wing'd with vain deſires;
" My manhood, long miſled by wand'ring fires,
" Follow'd falſe lights; and when their glimpſe was gone,
" My pride ſtruck out new ſparkles of her own.

1781. Ætat. 72.

" Such was I, ſuch by Nature ſtill I am;
" Be thine the glory, and be mine the ſhame.
" Good life be now my taſk: my doubts are done;
" What more could ſhock my faith than Three in One?"

In drawing Dryden's character, Johnſon has given, though I ſuppoſe unintentionally, ſome touches of his own. Thus, " The power that predominated in his intellectual operations was rather ſtrong reaſon than quick ſenſibility. Upon all occaſions that were preſented, he ſtudied rather than felt; and produced ſentiments not ſuch as Nature enforces, but meditation ſupplies. With the ſimple and elemental paſſions as they ſpring ſeparate in the mind, he ſeems not much acquainted. He is, therefore, with all his variety of excellence, not often pathetick; and had ſo little ſenſibility of the power of effuſions purely natural, that he did not eſteem them in others."—It may indeed be obſerved, that in all the numerous writings of Johnſon, whether in proſe or verſe, and even in his tragedy, of which the ſubject is the diſtreſs of an unfortunate Princeſs, there is not a ſingle paſſage that ever drew a tear.

Various readings in the Life of DRYDEN.

" The reaſon of this general peruſal, Addiſon has attempted to [find in] *derive from* the delight which the mind feels in the inveſtigation of ſecrets.

" His beſt actions are but [convenient] *inability of wickedneſs.*

" When once he had engaged himſelf in diſputation, [matter] *thoughts* flowed in on either ſide.

" The

" The abyſs of un-ideal [emptineſs] *vacancy.* 1781.
" Theſe, like [many other harlots,] *the har-* Ætat. 72.
lots of other men, had his love though not his approbation.

" He [ſometimes diſplays] *deſcends to diſplay* his knowledge with pedantick oſtentation.

" French words which [were then uſed in] *had then crept into* converſation."

The Life of POPE was written by Johnſon *con amore,* both from the early poſſeſſion which that writer had taken of his mind, and from the pleaſure which he muſt have felt, in for ever ſilencing all attempts to leſſen his poetical fame, by demonſtrating his excellence, and pronouncing, a triumphant apotheoſis.—" After all this, it is ſurely ſuperfluous to anſwer the queſtion that has once been aſked, Whether Pope was a poet? otherwiſe than by aſking in return, If Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumſcribe poetry by a definition, will only ſhew the narrowneſs of the definer; though a definition which ſhall exclude Pope will not eaſily be made. Let us look round upon the preſent time, and back upon the paſt; let us inquire to whom the voice of mankind has decreed the wreath of poetry; let their productions be examined, and their claims ſtated, and the pretenſions of Pope will be no more diſputed."

I remember once to have heard Johnſon ſay, " Sir, a thouſand years may elapſe before there ſhall appear another man with a power of verſification equal to that of Pope. That power muſt undoubtedly be allowed its due ſhare in enhancing the value of his captivating compoſition."

Johnſon, who had done liberal juſtice to Warburton in his edition of Shakſpeare, which was publiſhed during the life of that powerful

1781. Ætat. 72. writer, with ſtilll greater liberality took an opportunity of paying the tribute due to him, when he was no longer in "high place," but numbered with the dead*.

It ſeems ſtrange, that two ſuch men as Johnſon and Warburton, who lived in the ſame age and country, ſhould not only not have been in any degree of intimacy, but been almoſt perſonally unacquainted. But ſuch inſtances, tho' we muſt wonder at them are not rare. If I am rightly informed, after a careful enquiry, they never met but once, which was at the houſe of Mrs. French,

* Of Johnſon's conduct towards Warburton, a very honourable notice is taken by the editor of "Tracts by Warburton, and a Warburtonian, not admitted into the Collection of their reſpective Works." After an able and "fond, though not undiſtinguiſhing," conſideration of Warburton's character, he ſays, "In two immortal works, Johnſon has ſtood forth in the foremoſt rank of his admirers. By the teſtimony of ſuch a man, impertinence muſt be abaſhed, and malignity itſelf muſt be ſoftened. Of literary merit, Johnſon, as we all know, was a ſagacious but a moſt ſevere judge. Such was his diſcernment, that he pierced into the moſt ſecret ſprings of human actions; and ſuch was his integrity, that he always weighed the moral characters of his fellow-creatures in the 'balance of the ſanctuary.' He was too courageous to propitiate a rival, and too proud to truckle to a ſuperiour. Warburton he knew, as I know him, and as every man of ſenſe and virtue would wiſh to be known—I mean, both from his own writings, and from the writings of thoſe who diſſented from his principles, or who envied his reputation. But, as to favours, he had never received or aſked any from the biſhop of Glouceſter; and, if my memory fails me not, he had ſeen him only once, when they met almoſt without deſign. converſed without much effort, and parted without any laſting impreſſions of hatred or affection. Yet, with all the ardour of ſympathetick genius, Johnſon has done that ſpontaneouſly and ably, which, by ſome writers, had been before attempted injudiciouſly, and which, by others, from whom more ſucceſsful attempts might have been expected, has not *hitherto* been done at all. He ſpoke well

French, in London, well known for her elegant assemblies, and bringing eminent characters together. The interview proved to be mutually agreeable. 1781. Ætat. 72.

I am well informed, that Warburton said of Johnson, "I admire him, but I cannot bear his style:" and that Johnson being told of this, said, "That is exactly my case as to him." The manner in which he expressed his admiration of the fertility of Warburton's genius and of the variety of his materials, was, "The table is always full,

well of Warburton, without insulting those whom Warburton despised. He suppressed not the imperfections of this extraordinary man, while he endeavoured to do justice to his numerous and transcendental excellencies. He defended him when living, amidst the clamours of his enemies; and praised him when dead, amidst the *silence of his friends*.

Having availed myself of this editor's eulogy on my departed friend, for which I warmly thank him, let me not suffer the lustre of his reputation, honestly acquired by profound learning and vigorous eloquence, to be tarnished by a charge of illiberality. He has been accused of invidiously dragging again into light certain writings of a person respectable by his talents, his learning, his station, and his age, which were published a great many years ago, and have since, it is said, been silently given up by their authour. But when it is considered that these writings were not *sins of youth*, but deliberate works of one well advanced in life, overflowing at once with flattery to a great man of great interest in the Church, and with unjust and acrimonious abuse of two men of eminent merit; and that, though it would have been unreasonable to expect an humiliating recantation, no apology whatever has been made in the cool of the evening, for the oppressive fervour of the heat of the day; no slight relenting indication has appeared in any note, or any corner of later publications; is it not fair to understand him as superciliously persevering? When he allows the shafts to remain in the wounds, and will not stretch forth a lenient hand, is it wrong, is it not generous to become an indignant avenger?

Sir.

1781. Ætat. 72. Sir. He brings things from the north, and the ſouth, and from every quarter. In his 'Divine Legation,' you are always entertained. He carries you round and round, without carrying you forward to the point; but then you have no wiſh to be carried forward." He ſaid to the Rev. Mr. Strahan, "Warburton is perhaps the laſt man who has written with a mind full of reading and reflection."

It is remarkable, that in the life of Broome, Johnſon takes notice of Dr. Warburton's uſing a mode of expreſſion which he himſelf uſed, and that not ſeldom, to the great offence of thoſe who did not know him. Having occaſion to mention a note, ſtating the different parts which were executed by the aſſociated tranſlators of "The Odyſſey," he ſays, "Dr. Warburton told me, in his warm language, that he thought the relation given in the note *a lie*." The language is *warm* indeed; and, I muſt own, cannot be juſtified in conſiſtency with a decent regard to the eſtabliſhed forms of ſpeech. Johnſon had accuſtomed himſelf to uſe the word *lie*, to expreſs a miſtake or an errour in relation; in ſhort, when the thing *was not ſo as told*, though the relator did not *mean* to deceive. When he thought there was intentional falſehood in the relator, his expreſſion was, "He *lies*, and he *knows* he *lies*."

Speaking of Pope's not having been known to excel in converſation, Johnſon obſerves, that "traditional memory retains no ſallies of raillery, or ſentences of obſervation; nothing either pointed or ſolid, wiſe or merry; and that one apophthegm only is recorded." In this reſpect, Pope differed widely from Johnſon, whoſe converſation was, perhaps, more admirable than even his writings, however excellent. Mr. Wilkes

Wilkes has, however, favoured me with one repartee of Pope, of which Johnſon was not informed. Johnſon, after juſtly cenſuring him for having "nurſed in his mind a fooliſh diſeſteem of Kings," tells, us, yet a little regard ſhewn him by the Prince of Wales melted his obduracy; and he had not much to ſay when he was aſked by his Royal Highneſs, *how he could love a Prince while he diſliked Kings?*" The anſwer which Pope made, was, "The young lion is harmleſs, and even playful; but when his claws are full grown he becomes cruel, dreadful and miſchievous." 1781. Ætat. 72.

But although we have no collection of Pope's ſayings, it is not therefore to be concluded, that he was not agreeable in ſocial intercourſe; for Johnſon himſelf has been heard to ſay, that "the happieſt converſation is that of which nothing is diſtinctly remembered but a general effect of pleaſing impreſſion." The late Lord Somerville*, who ſaw much both of great and brilliant life, told me, that he had dined in company with Pope, and that after dinner the *little man*, as he called him, drank his bottle of Burgundy, and was exceeding gay and entertaining.

* Let me here expreſs my grateful remembrance of Lord Somerville's kindneſs to me, at a very early period. He was the firſt perſon of high rank that took particular notice of me in the way moſt flattering to a young man, fondly ambitious of being diſtinguiſhed for his literary talents; and by the honour of his encouragement made me think well of myſelf, and aſpire to deſerve it better. He had a happy art of communicating his varied knowledge of the world, in ſhort remarks and anecdotes, with a pleaſant gravity, that was exceedingly engaging. Never ſhall I forget the hours which I enjoyed with him at his apartments in the Royal Palace of Holy-Rood Houſe, and at his ſeat near Edinburgh, which he himſelf had formed with an elegant taſte.

I can-

1781. Ætat. 72. I cannot with-hold from my great friend a cenſure of at leaſt culpable inattention, to a nobleman, who, it has been ſhewn, behaved to him with uncommon politeneſs. He ſays, "Except Lord Bathurſt, none of Pope's noble friends were ſuch as that a good man would wiſh to have his intimacy with them known to poſterity." This will not apply to Lord Mansfield, who was not ennobled in Pope's life-time; but Johnſon ſhould have recollected, that Lord Marchmont was one of thoſe noble friends. He includes his Lordſhip along with Lord Bolingbroke, in a charge of neglect of the papers which Pope left by his will; when, in truth as I myſelf pointed out to him, before he wrote that poet's life, the papers were, "committed to *the ſole care and judgment* of Lord Bolingbroke, unleſs he (Lord Bolingbroke) ſhall not ſurvive me;" ſo that Lord Marchmont had no concern whatever with them. After the firſt edition of the Lives, Mr. Malone, whoſe love of juſtice is equal to his accuracy, made, in my hearing, the ſame remark to Johnſon; yet he omitted to correct the erroneous ſtatement. Theſe particulars I mention, in the belief that there was only forgetfulneſs in my friend; but I owe this much to the Earl of Marchmont's reputation, who, were there no other memorials, will be immortaliſed by that line of Pope, in the verſes on his grotto:

"And the bright flame was ſhot through
Marchmont's ſoul."

Various readings in the Life of POPE.

"[Somewhat free] *ſufficiently bold* in his criticiſms.

"All

1781. Ætat. 72.

"All the gay [niceties] *varieties* of diction.

"Strikes the imagination with far [more] *greater* force.

"It is [probably] *certainly* the nobleſt verſion of poetry which the world has ever ſeen.

"Every ſheet enabled him to write the next with [leſs trouble] *more facility*.

"No man ſympathizes with [vanity depreſſed] *the ſorrows of vanity*.

"It had been [criminal] *leſs eaſily excuſed*.

"When he [threatened to lay down] *talked of laying down* his pen.

"Society [is ſo named emphatically in oppoſition to] *politically regulated, is a ſtate contradiſtinguiſhed from* a ſtate of nature.

"A fictitious life of an [abſurd] *infatuated* ſcholar.

"A fooliſh [contempt, diſregard,] *diſeſteem* of Kings.

"His hopes and fears, his joys and ſorrows [were like thoſe of other mortals] *acted ſtrongly upon his mind*.

"Eager to purſue knowledge and attentive to [accumulate] *retain it*.

"A mind [excurſive] *active*, ambitious, and adventurous.

"In its [nobleſt] *wideſt* ſearches ſtill longing to go forward.

"He wrote in ſuch a manner as might expoſe him to few [neglects] *hazards*.

"The [reaſonableneſs] *juſtice* of my determination.

"A [favourite] *delicious* employment of the poets.

"More terrifick and more powerful [beings] *phantoms* perform on the ſtormy ocean.

"The inventor of [thoſe] *this* petty [beings] *nation*.

"The [mind] *heart* naturally loves truth."

In

1781. Ætat. 72. In the life of ADDISON we find an unpleaſing account of his having lent Steele a hundred pounds, and "reclaimed his loan by an execution." In the new edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, the authenticity of this anecdote is denied. But Mr. Malone has obliged me with the following note concerning it:

"Many perſons having doubts concerning this fact, I applied to Dr. Johnſon to learn on what authority he aſſerted it. He told me, he had it from Savage, who lived in intimacy with Steele, and who informed him, that Steele told him the ſtory with tears in his eyes.—Ben Victor, Dr. Johnſon ſaid, likewiſe informed him of this remarkable tranſaction, from the relation of Mr. Wilkes the comedian, who was alſo an intimate of Steele's.—Some, in defence of Addiſon, have ſaid, that 'the act was done with the good-natured view of rouſing Steele, and correcting that profuſion which always made him neceſſitous.'—'If that were the caſe, (ſaid Johnſon,) and that he only wanted to alarm Steele, he would afterwards have *returned* the money to his friend, which it is not pretended he did.'—'This, too, (he added,) might be retorted by an advocate for Steele, who might alledge, that he did not repay the loan *intentionally*, merely to ſee whether Addiſon would be mean and ungenerous enough to make uſe of legal proceſs to recover it. But of ſuch ſpeculations there is no end: we cannot dive into the hearts of men; but their actions are open to obſervation.'

"I then mentioned to him that ſome people thought that Mr. Addiſon's character was ſo pure, that the fact, *though true*, ought to have been ſuppreſſed. He ſaw no reaſon for this. 'If nothing but the bright ſide of characters ſhould

ſhould be ſhewn, we ſhould ſit down in deſpondency, and think it utterly impoſſible to imitate them in *any thing*. The ſacred writers (he obſerved) related the vicious as well as the virtuous actions of men; which had this moral effect, that it kept mankind from *deſpair*, into which otherwiſe they would naturally fall, were they not ſupported by the recollection that others had offended like themſelves, and by penitence and amendment of life had been reſtored to the favour of Heaven.' 1781. Ætat. 72.

"March 15, 1782. E. M."

The laſt paragraph of this note is of great importance; and I requeſt that my readers may conſider it with particular attention. It will be afterwards referred to in this work.

Various readings in the life of ADDISON.

"[But he was our firſt great example] *He was, however, one of our earlieſt examples* of correctneſs.

"And [overlook] *deſpiſe* their maſters.

"His inſtructions were ſuch as the [ſtate] *character* of his [own time] *readers* made [neceſſary] *proper*.

"His purpoſe was to [diffuſe] *infuſe* literary curioſity by gentle and unſuſpected conveyance [among] *into* the gay, the idle, and the wealthy.

"Framed rather for thoſe that [wiſh] *are learning* to write.

"Domeſtic [manners] *ſcenes*.

In his life of PARNELL, I wonder that Johnſon omitted to inſert an epitaph which he had long before compoſed for that amiable man, without ever writing it down, but which he was ſo good as, at my requeſt, to dictate me, by which means it has been preſerved.

"*Hic*

1781.
Ætat. 72.

"*Hic requieſcit* THOMAS PARNELL, *S. T. P.*

"*Qui ſacerdos pariter et Poeta,*
"*Utraſque partes ita implevit,*
"*Ut neque ſacerdoti ſuavitas poetæ,*
"*Nec poetæ ſacerdotis ſanctitas deeſſet.*"

Various readings in the life of PARNELL.

"About three years [after] *afterwards.*

"[Did not much want] *was in no great need of* improvement.

"But his proſperity *did not laſt long* [was clouded by that which took away all his powers of enjoying either profit or pleaſure, the death of his wife, whom he is ſaid to have lamented with ſuch ſorrow, as haſtened his end.*] His end, whatever was the cauſe, was now approaching.

"In the Hermit, the [compoſition] *narrative*, as it is leſs airy, is leſs pleaſing."

In the Life of BLACKMORE, we find that writer's reputation generouſly cleared by Johnſon, from the cloud of prejudice which the malignity of contemporary wits had raiſed around it. In this ſpirited exertion of juſtice, he has been imitated by Sir Joſhua Reynolds, in his praiſe of the architecture of Vanburgh.

We trace Johnſon's own character in his obſervation on Blackmore's "magnanimity as an authour." "The inceſſant attacks of his enemies, whether ſerious or merry, are never diſcovered to have diſturbed his quiet, or to have leſſened

* I ſhould have thought that Johnſon, who had felt the ſevere affliction from which Parnell never recovered, would have preſerved this paſſage.

his

his confidence in himſelf." Johnſon, I recollect, 1781.
once told me, laughing heartily, that he under- Ætat. 72.
ſtood it had been ſaid of him, "He *appears* not to feel; but when he is *alone*, depend upon it, he *ſuffers ſadly*." I am as certain as I can be of any man's real ſentiments, that he *enjoyed* the perpetual ſhower of little hoſtile arrows, as evidences of his fame.

Various readings in the Life of BLACKMORE.

"To [ſet] *engage* poetry [on the ſide] *in the cauſe* of virtue.

"He likewiſe [eſtabliſhed] *enforced* the truth of revelation.

"[Kindneſs] *benevolence* was aſhamed to favour.

"His practice, which was once [very extenſive] *invidiouſly great*."

"There is ſcarcely any diſtemper of dreadful name [of] which he has not [ſhewn] *taught his reader* how [it is] *to* [be oppoſed] *oppoſe*.

"Of this [contemptuous] *indecent* arrogance.

"[He wrote] *but produced* likewiſe a work of a different kind.

"At leaſt [written] *compiled* with integrity.

"Faults which many tongues [were deſirous] *would have made haſte* to publiſh.

"But though he [had not] *could not boaſt of* much critical knowledge.

"He [uſed] *waited for* no felicities of fancy.

"Or had ever elevated his [mind] *views* to that ideal perfection which every [mind] *genius* born to excel is condemned always to purſue and never overtake.

"The [firſt great] *fundamental* principle of wiſdom and of virtue."

Various

1781.
Ætat. 72.

Various readings in the life of PHILIPS.

"His dreaded [rival] *antagoniſt* Pope.

"They [have not often much] *are not loaded with* thought.

"In his tranſlations from Pindar, he [will not be denied to have reached] *found the art of reaching* all the obſcurity of the Theban bard."

Various readings in the Life of CONGREVE.

"Congreve's converſation muſt ſurely have been *at leaſt* equally pleaſing with his writings.

"It apparently [requires] *pre-ſuppoſes* a familiar knowledge of many characters.

"Reciprocation of [ſimilies] *conceits*.

"The dialogue is quick and [various] *ſparkling*.

"Love for Love; a comedy [more drawn from life] *of nearer alliance to life*.

"The general character of his miſcellanies is, that they ſhew little wit and [no] *little* virtue.

"[Perhaps] *certainly* he had not the fire requiſite for the higher ſpecies of lyrick poetry."

Various readings in the Life of TICKELL.

"[Longed] *long wiſhed* to peruſe it.

"At the [acceſſion] *arrival* of King George.

"Fiction [unnaturally] *unſkilfully* compounded of Grecian deities and Gothick fairies."

Various readings in the Life of AKENSIDE.

"For [another] *a different* purpoſe.

"[A furious] *an unneceſſary* and outrageous zeal.

"[Something

"[Something which] *what* he called and thought liberty. 1781. Ætat. 72.

"A [favourer of innovation] *lover of contradiction.*

"Warburton's [cenſure] *objections.*

"His rage [for liberty] *of patriotiſm.*

"Mr. Dyſon with [a zeal] *an ardour* of friendſhip."

In the Life of LYTTELTON, Johnſon ſeems to have been not favourably diſpoſed towards that nobleman. Mrs. Thrale ſuggeſts that he was offended by *Molly Aſton*'s preference of his Lordſhip to him.* I can by no means join the cenſure beſtowed by Johnſon on his Lordſhip, whom he calls "poor Lyttelton," for returning thanks to the Critical Reviewers,

* Let not my readers ſmile to think of Johnſon's being a candidate for female favour: Mr. Peter Garrick aſſured me, that he was told by a lady, that in her opinion Johnſon was "a very *ſeducing man.*" Diſadvantages of perſon and manner may be forgotten, where intellectual pleaſure is communicated to a ſuſceptible mind; and that Johnſon was capable of ſeeing the moſt delicate and diſintereſted attachment, appears from the following letter, which is publiſhed by Mrs. Thrale, with ſome others to the ſame perſon, of which the excellence is not ſo apparent:

To Miſs BOOTHBY.

"DEAREST MADAM, January, 1755.

"THOUGH I am afraid your illneſs leaves you little leiſure for the reception of airy civilities, yet I cannot forbear to pay you my congratulations on the new year; and to declare my wiſhes that your years to come may be many and happy. In this wiſh, indeed, I include myſelf, who have none but you on whom my heart repoſes; yet ſurely I wiſh your good, even though your ſituation were ſuch as ſhould permit you to communicate no gratifications to, deareſt, deareſt Madam,

"Your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

for

1781. Ætat. 72. for having "kindly commended" his "*Dialogues of the Dead.*" Such "acknowledgements (ſays my friend) never can be proper, ſince they muſt be paid either for flattery or for juſtice." In my opinion, the moſt upright man, who has been tried on a falſe accuſation, may, when he is acquitted, make a bow to his jury. And when thoſe who, no matter by what right, are ſo much the arbiters of literary merit, as in a conſiderable degree to influence the public opinion, review an authour's work, *placido lumine*, when I am afraid mankind in general are better pleaſed with ſeverity, he may ſurely expreſs a grateful ſenſe of their civility.

Various readings in the Life of LYTTELTON.

"He ſolaced [himſelf] *his grief* by writing a long poem to her memory.

"The production rather [of a mind that means well than thinks vigorouſly] *as it ſeems of leiſure than of ſtudy, rather effuſſions than compoſitions.*

"His laſt literary [work] *production.*

"[Found the way] *undertook* to perſuade.

As to the introduction to his critical examination of the genius and writings of YOUNG, he did Mr. Herbert Croft, then a barriſter of Lincoln's-inn, now a clergyman, the honour to adopt a life of Young written by that gentleman, who was the friend of Dr. Young's ſon, and wiſhed to vindicate him from ſome very miſtaken remarks to his prejudice. Mr. Croft's performance was ſubjected to the reviſion of Dr. Johnſon, as appears from the following note to Mr. John Nichols:

"This

"This Life of Dr. Young was written by a friend of his ſon. What is croſſed with black is expunged by the authour, what is croſſed with red is expunged by me. If you find any thing more that can be well omitted, I ſhall not be ſorry to ſee it yet ſhorter." 1781. Ætat. 72.

It has always appeared to me to have a conſiderable ſhare of merit, and to diſplay a pretty ſucceſsful imitation of Johnſon's ſtyle. When I mentioned this to a very eminent literary character, he oppoſed me vehemently, exclaiming, "No, no, it is *not* a good imitation of Johnſon; it has all his pomp without his force; it has all the nodoſities of the oak without its ſtrength." This was an image ſo happy, that one might have thought he would have been ſatisfied with it; but he was not. And ſetting his mind again to work, he added, with exquiſite felicity, "It has all the contortions of the Sybil, without the inſpiration."

Mr. Croft very properly guards us againſt ſuppoſing that Young was a gloomy man; and mentions, that "his pariſh was indebted to the good-humour of the authour of the '*Night Thoughts*' for an aſſembly and a Bowling-green." A letter from a noble foreigner is quoted, in which he is ſaid to have been "very pleaſant in converſation."

Mr. Langton, who frequently viſited him, informs me, that there was an air of benevolence in his manner, but that he could obtain from him leſs information than he had hoped to receive from one who had lived ſo much in intercourſe with the brighteſt men of what has been called the Auguſtan age of England; and that he ſhewed a degree of eager curioſity concerning the common occurrences that were then paſſing, which appeared ſomewhat remarkable

1781. Ætat. 72. in a man of ſuch intellectual ſtores, of ſuch an advanced age, and who had retired from life with declared diſappointment in his expectations.

An inſtance at once of his penſive turn of mind, and his cheerfulneſs of temper, appeared in a little ſtory which he himſelf told to Mr. Langton, when they were walking in his garden: "Here (ſaid he) I had put a handſome ſun dial, with this inſcription, *eheu fugaces!* which (ſpeaking with a ſmile) was ſadly verified, for by the next morning my dial had been carried off."

"It gives much pleaſure to obſerve, that however Johnſon may have caſually talked, yet when he ſits, as "an ardent judge zealous in his truſt, giving ſentence," upon the excellent works of Young, he allows them the high praiſe to which they are juſtly entitled. "The *Univerſal Paſſion* (ſays he) is indeed a very great performance,—his diſtichs have the weight of ſolid ſentiment, and his points the ſharpneſs of reſiſtleſs truth."

But I was moſt anxious concerning Johnſon's deciſion upon "*Night Thoughts*," which I eſteem as a maſs of the grandeſt and richeſt poetry that human has genius ever produced; and was delighted to find this character of that work: "In his '*Night Thoughts*' he has exhibited a very wide diſplay of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and ſtriking alluſions; a wilderneſs of thought, in which the fertility of fancy ſcatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verſe could not be changed for rhime but with diſadvantage." And afterwards, "Particular lines are not to be regarded, the power is in the whole, and in the whole there is a magnificence like that aſcribed to Chineſe plantation, the magnificence of vaſt extent and endleſs diverſity."

But

But there is in this Poem not only all that Johnſon ſo well brings in view, but a power of the *Fathetick* beyond almoſt any example that I have ſeen. He who does not feel his nerves ſhaken, and his heart pierced by many paſſages in this extraordinary work, particularly by that moſt affecting one, which deſcribes the gradual torment ſuffered by the contemplation of an object of affectionate attachment, viſibly and certainly decaying into diſſolution, muſt be of a hard and obſtinate frame. 1781. Ætat. 72.

To all the other excellencies of "*Night Thoughts*", let me add the great and peculiar one, that they contain not only the nobleſt ſentiments of virtue, and the immortality of the ſoul, but the *Chriſtian Sacrifice*, the *Divine Propitiation*, with all its intereſting circumſtances, and conſolations to "a wounded ſpirit," ſolemnly and poetically diſplayed in ſuch imagery and language, as cannot fail to exalt, animate, and ſoothe the truly pious. No book whatever can be recommended to young perſons, with better hopes of ſeaſoning their minds with *vital religion* than YOUNG's "NIGHT THOUGHTS."

In the life of SWIFT, it appears to me that Johnſon had a certain degree of prejudice againſt that extraordinary man, of which I have elſewhere had occaſion to ſpeak. Mr. Thomas Sheridan imputed it to a ſuppoſed apprehenſion in Johnſon, that Swift had not been ſufficiently active in obtaining for him an Iriſh degree when it was ſolicited, but of this there was not ſufficient evidence; and let me not preſume to charge Johnſon with injuſtice, becauſe he did not think ſo highly of the writings of this authour, as I have done from my youth upwards. Yet that he had an unfavourable bias is evident, were it only from that paſſage in which he ſpeaks

1781. Ætat. 72. of Swift's practice of ſaving, as, "firſt ridiculous and at laſt deteſtable;" and yet after ſome examination of circumſtances, finds himſelf obliged to own, that "it will perhaps appear that he only liked one mode of expence better than another, and ſaved merely that he might have ſomething to give."

One obſervation which Johnſon makes in Swift's life ſhould be often inculcated: "It may be juſtly ſuppoſed, that there was in his converſation what appears ſo frequently in his letters, an affectation of familiarity with the great, an ambition of momentary equality, fought and enjoyed by the neglect of thoſe ceremonies which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed as the barriers between one order of ſociety and another. This tranſgreſſion of regularity was by himſelf and his admirers termed greatneſs of ſoul; but a great mind diſdains to hold any thing by courteſy, and therefore never uſurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity puts himſelf in his power; he is either repelled with helpleſs indignity, or endured by clemency and condeſcenſion."

Various readings in the life of SWIFT.

"Charity may be perſuaded to think that it might be written by a man of *a* peculiar [opinions] *character*, without ill intention.

"He did not [diſown] *deny* it.

"[To] *by* whoſe kindneſs it is not unlikely that he was [indebted for] *advanced to* his benefices.

"[With] *for* this purpoſe he had recourſe to Mr. Harley.

"Sharpe, whom he [repreſents] *deſcribes* as 'the harmleſs tool of others hate.'

"Harley

" Harley was ſlow becauſe he was [irreſolute] *doubtful.* 1781. Ætat. 72.

" When [readers were not many] *we were not yet a nation of readers.*

" [Every man who] *he that could ſay he* knew him.

" Every man of known influence has ſo many [more] petitions [than] *which* he [can] *cannot* grant, that he muſt neceſſarily offend more than he [can gratify] *gratifies.*

" Eccleſiaſtical [preferments] *benefices.*

" Swift [procured] *contrived* an interview.

" [As a writer] *In his works* he has given very different ſpecimens.

" On all common occaſions he habitually [aſſumes] *affects* a ſtyle of [ſuperiority] *arrogance.*

" By the [omiſſion] *neglect* of thoſe ceremonies.

" That their merits filled the world [and] *or that* there was no [room for] *hope of* more."

I have not confined myſelf to the order of the " Lives," in making my few remarks. Indeed a different order is obſerved in the original publication, and in the collection of Johnſon's Works. And ſhould it be objected, that many of my various readings are inconſiderable, thoſe who make the objection will be pleaſed to conſider, that ſuch ſmall particulars are intended for thoſe who are nicely critical in compoſition, to whom they will be an acceptable ſelection.

" Spence's Anecdotes," which are frequently quoted and referred to in Johnſon's " Lives of the Poets," are in a manuſcript collection, made by the Reverend Dr. Joſeph Spence, containing a number of particulars concerning eminent men. To each anecdote is marked the name of

the

1781. Ætat. 72. the perſon on whoſe authority it is mentioned This valuable collection is the property of the Duke of Newcaſtle, who upon the application of Sir Lucas Pepys, was pleaſed to permit it to be put into the hands of Dr. Johnſon, who I am ſorry to think made but an aukward return. "Great aſſiſtance (ſays he) has been given me by Mr. Spence's Collection, of which I conſider the communication as a favour worthy of public acknowledgement;" but he has not owned to whom he was obliged; ſo that the acknowledgement is unappropriated to his Grace.

While the world in general was filled with admiration of Johnſon's "Lives of the Poets," there were narrow circles in which prejudice and reſentment were foſtered, and from whence attacks of different ſorts iſſued againſt him. By ſome violent Whigs he was arraigned of injuſtice to Milton; by ſome Cambridge men of depreciating Gray, and his expreſſing with a dignified freedom what he really thought of George, Lord Lyttelton, gave offence to ſome of the friends of that nobleman, and particularly produced a declaration of war againſt him from Mrs. Montague, the ingenious eſſayiſt on Shakſpeare, between whom and his Lordſhip a commerce of reciprocal compliments had long been carried on. In this war the ſmaller powers in alliance with him were of courſe led to engage, at leaſt on the defenſive, and thus I for one, was excluded from the enjoyment of "A Feaſt of Reaſon," ſuch as Mr. Cumberland has deſcribed, with a keen, yet juſt and delicate pen, in his "OBSERVER." Theſe minute inconveniencies gave not the leaſt diſturbance to Johnſon. He nobly ſaid, when I talked to him of the feeble, though ſhrill outcry which had been raiſed, "Sir, I conſidered myſelf as entruſted with

with a certain portion of truth. I have given my opinion ſincerely; let them ſhew where they think me wrong." 1781. Ætat. 72

While my friend is thus contemplated in the ſplendour derived from his laſt and perhaps moſt admirable work, I introduce him with peculiar propriety as the correſpondent of WARREN HASTINGS, a man whoſe regard reflects dignity even upon JOHNSON; a man, the extent of whoſe abilities was equal to that of his power; and who, by thoſe who are fortunate enough to know him in private life, is admired for his literature and taſte, and beloved for the candour, moderation, and mildneſs of his character. Were I capable of paying a ſuitable tribute of admiration to him, I ſhould certainly not withhold it at a moment* when it is not poſſible that I ſhould be ſuſpected of being an intereſted flatterer. But how weak would be my voice after that of the millions whom he governed. His condeſcending and obliging compliance with my ſolicitation, I with humble gratitude acknowledge; and while by publiſhing his letter to me, accompanying the valuable communication, I do eminent honour to my great friend, I ſhall entirely diſregard any invidious ſuggeſtions, that as I in ſome degree participate in the honour, I have, at the ſame time, the gratification of my own vanity in view.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"SIR, Park-lane, Dec. 2, 1790.

"I HAVE been fortunately ſpared the troubleſome ſuſpenſe of a long ſearch, to which, in performance of my promiſe, I had devoted this

* January, 1791.

morning,

1781. Ætat. 72. morning, by lighting upon the objects of it among the first papers that I laid my hands on: my veneration for your great and good friend, Dr. Johnson, and the pride, or I hope something of a better sentiment, which I indulged in possessing such memorials of his good-will towards me, having induced me to bind them in a parcel containing other select papers, and labelled with the titles appertaining to them. They consist but of three letters, which I believe were all that I ever received from Dr. Johnson. Of these, one, which was written in quadruplicate, under the different dates of its respective dispatches, has already been made publick, but not from any communication of mine. This, however, I have joined to the rest; and have now the pleasure of sending them to you for the use to which you informed me it was your desire to destine them.

"My promise was pledged with the condition, that if the letters were found to contain any thing which should render them improper for the publick eye, you would dispense with the performance of it. You will have the goodness, I am sure, to pardon my recalling this stipulation to your recollection, as I should be loth to appear negligent of that obligation which is always implied in an epistolary confidence. In the reservation of that right I have read them over with the most scrupulous attention, but have not seen them in the slightest cause on that ground to with-hold them from you. But though not on that, yet on another ground I own I feel a little, yet but a little, reluctance to part with them: I mean on that of my own credit, which I fear will suffer by the information conveyed by them, that I was early in the possession of such valuable instructions for the beneficial employment

ployment of the influence of my late ſtation, and (as it may ſeem) have ſo little availed myſelf of them. Whether I could, if it were neceſſary, defend myſelf againſt ſuch an imputation, it little concerns the world to know. I look only to the effects which theſe relicks may produce, conſidered as evidences of the virtues of their authour: and believing that they will be found to diſplay an uncommon warmth of private friendſhip, and a mind ever attentive to the improvement and extenſion of uſeful knowledge, and ſolicitous for the intereſts of mankind, I can cheerfully ſubmit to the little ſacrifice of my own fame to contribute to the illuſtration of ſo great and venerable a character. They cannot be better applied, for that end, than by being entruſted to your hands. Allow me, with this offering, to infer from it a proof of the very great eſteem with which I have the honour to profeſs myſelf, Sir,

1781. Ætat. 72.

"Your moſt obedient

"And moſt humble ſervant,

"WARREN HASTINGS.

"P. S. At ſome future time, and when you have no further occaſion for theſe papers, I ſhall be obliged to you if you would return them."

The laſt of the three letters thus graciouſly put into my hands, and which has already appeared in publick, belongs to this year; but I ſhall previouſly inſert the two firſt in the order of their dates. They altogether form a grand group in my biographical picture.

To

1781. Ætat. 72.

To the Honourable WARREN HASTINGS, *Esq.*

"SIR,

"THOUGH I have had but little perſonal knowledge of you, I have had enough to make me wiſh for more; and though it be now a long time ſince I was honoured by your viſit, I had too much pleaſure from it to forget it. By thoſe whom we delight to remember, we are unwilling to be forgotten; and therefore I cannot omit this opportunity of reviving myſelf in your memory by a letter which you will receive from the hands of my friend Mr. Chambers;* a man, whoſe purity of manners and vigour of mind are ſufficient to make every thing welcome that he brings.

"That this is my only reaſon for writing, will be too apparent by the uſeleſſneſs of my letter to any other purpoſe. I have no queſtions to aſk; not that I want curioſity after either the ancient or preſent ſtate of regions, in which have been ſeen all the power and ſplendour of wide extended empire; and which, as by ſome grant of natural ſuperiority, ſupply the reſt of the world with almoſt all that pride deſires, and luxury enjoys. But my knowledge of them is too ſcanty to furniſh me with proper topicks of enquiry; I can only wiſh for information; and hope, that a mind comprehenſive like yours will find leiſure, amidſt the care of your important ſtation, to enquire into many ſubjects of which the European world either thinks not at all, or thinks with deficient intelligence and uncertain conjecture. I ſhall hope, that he who once intended to increaſe the learn-

* Now Sir Robert Chambers, one of his Majeſty's Judges in India.

ing

ing of his country by the introduction of the Perſian language, will examine nicely the traditions and hiſtories of the Eaſt; they will ſurvey the wonders of its ancient edifices, and trace the veſtiges of its ruined cities; and that, at his return, we ſhall know the arts and opinions of a race of men, from whom very little has been hitherto derived. 1781. Ætat. 72.

"You, Sir, have no need of being told by me, how much may be added by your attention and patronage to experimental knowledge and natural hiſtory. There are arts of manufacture practiſed in the countries in which you preſide, which are yet very imperfectly known here, either to artificers or philoſophers. Of the natural productions, animate and inanimate, we yet have ſo little intelligence, that our books are filled, I fear, with conjectures about things which an Indian peaſant knows by his ſenſes.

"Many of thoſe things my firſt wiſh is to ſee; my ſecond to know by ſuch accounts as a man like you will be able to give.

"As I have not ſkill to aſk proper queſtions, I have likewiſe no ſuch acceſs to great men as can enable me to ſend you any political information. Of the agitations of an unſettled government, and the ſtruggles of a feeble miniſtry, care is doubtleſs taken to give you more exact accounts than I can obtain. If you are inclined to intereſt yourſelf much in publick tranſactions, it is no misfortune to you to be ſo diſtant from them.

"That literature is not totally forſaking us, and that your favourite language is not neglected will appear from the book*, which I ſhould

* Jones's "Perſian Grammar."

have

1781. Ætat. 72. have pleaſed myſelf more with ſending, if I could have preſented it bound; but time was wanting. I beg, however, Sir, that you will accept it from a man very deſirous of your regard; and that if you think me able to gratify you by any thing more important, you will employ me.

"I am going to take leave, perhaps a very long leave, of my dear Mr. Chambers. That he is going to live where you govern, may juſtly alleviate the regret of parting; and the hope of ſeeing both him and you again, which I am not willing to mingle with doubt, muſt at preſent, comfort as it can, Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"March 30, 1774. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the Same.

"SIR

"BEING informed that by the departure of a ſhip, there is now an opportunity of writing to Bengal, I am unwilling to ſlip out of your memory by my own negligence, and therefore take the liberty of reminding you of my exiſtence, by ſending you a book which is not yet made publick.

"I have lately viſited a region leſs remote, and leſs illuſtrious than India, which afforded ſome occaſions for ſpeculation; what occurred to me, I have put into the volume*, of which I beg your acceptance.

"Men in your ſtation ſeldom have preſents totally diſintereſted; my book is received, let me now make my requeſt.

* "Journey to the Weſtern Iſlands of Scotland."

"There

" There is, ſomewhere within your government, a young adventurer, one Chauncy Lawrence, whoſe father is one of my oldeſt friends. Be pleaſed to ſhew the young man what countenance is fit, whether he wants to be reſtrained by your authority, or encouraged by your favour. His father is now Preſident of the College of Phyſicians, a man venerable for his knowledge, and more venerable for his virtue. 1781. Ætat. 72.

" I wiſh you a proſperous government, a ſafe return, and a long enjoyment of plenty and tranquillity. I am, Sir,

" Your moſt obedient

" And moſt humble ſervant,

" London, Dec. 20, 1774. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the ſame.

" SIR, Jan. 9, 1781.

" AMIDST the importance and multiplicity of affairs in which your great office engages you, I take the liberty of recalling your attention for a moment to literature, and will not prolong the interruption by an apology, which your character makes needleſs.

" Mr. Hoole, a gentleman long known, and long eſteemed in the India-Houſe, after having tranſlated Taſſo, has undertaken Arioſto. How well he is qualified for his undertaking he has already ſhewn. He is deſirous, Sir, of your favour in promoting his propoſals, and flatters me by ſuppoſing that my teſtimony may advance his intereſt.

" It is a new thing for a clerk of the India-Houſe to tranſlate poets—it is new for a Governour of Bengal to patronize learning. That he may find his ingenuity rewarded, and that learning

1781. learning may flouriſh under your protection, is
Æt. 72. the wiſh of, Sir,

" Your moſt humble ſervant,

SAM. JOHNSON."

I wrote to him in February, complaining of having been troubled by a recurrence of the perplexing queſtion of Liberty and Neceſſity—and mentioning that I hoped ſoon to meet him again in London.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

" DEAR SIR,

" I HOPED you had got rid of all this hypocriſy of miſery. What have you to do with Liberty and Neceſſity? Or what more than to hold your tongue about it? Do not doubt but I ſhall be moſt heartily glad to ſee you here again, for I love every part about you but your affectation of diſtreſs.

" I have at laſt finiſhed my Lives, and have laid up for you a load of copy, all out of order, ſo that it will amuſe you a long time to ſet it right. Come to me, my dear Bozzy, and let us be as happy as we can. We will go again to the Mitre, and talk old times over. I am, dear Sir,

" Yours affectionately,

" March 14, 1781. SAM. JOHNSON."

On Monday, March 19, I arrived in London, and on Tueſday, the 20th, met him in Fleet-ſtreet, walking, or rather indeed moving along; for his march is thus deſcribed in a very juſt

juſt and pictureſque manner, in a ſhort Life* of him publiſhed by Kearſley, very ſoon after his death: "When he walked the ſtreets, what with the conſtant roll of his head, and the concomitant motion of his body, he appeared to make his way by that motion, independent of his feet." That he was often much ſtared at while he advanced in this manner, may eaſily be believed; but it was not ſafe to make ſport of one ſo robuſt as he was. Mr. Langton ſaw him one day, in a fit of abſence, by a ſudden ſtart, drive the load off a porter's back, and walk forward briſkly, without being conſcious of what he had done. The porter was very angry, but ſtood ſtill, and eyed the huge figure with much earneſtneſs, till he was ſatisfied that his wiſeſt courſe was to be quiet, and take up his burthen again. 1781. Ætat. 72.

Our accidental meeting in the ſtreet after a long ſeparation was a pleaſing ſurprize to us both. He ſtepped aſide with me into Falcon-court, and made kind inquiries about my family, and as we were in a hurry going different ways, I promiſed to call on him next day; he ſaid he was engaged to go out in the morning.—"Early, Sir." ſaid I. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, a London morning does not go with the ſun."

I waited on him next evening, and he gave me a quantity of his original manuſcript of his "Lives of the Poets," which he had preſerved for me.

*With this well-choſen motto;

"——————— From his cradle
"He was a SCHOLAR, and a ripe and good one:
"And to add greater honours to his age
"Than man could give him, he died fearing Heaven."
SHAKSPEARE.

I found

1781. Ætat. 72. I found that his friend, Mr. Thrale, was now very ill, and had removed, I ſuppoſe by the ſolicitation of Mrs. Thrale, to a houſe in Groſvenor-ſquare. I was ſorry to find him ſadly changed in his appearance.

He told me I might now have the pleaſure to ſee Dr. Johnſon drink wine again, for he had lately returned to it. When I mentioned this to Johnſon, he ſaid, "I drink it now ſometimes, but not ſocially." The firſt evening that I was with him at Thrale's, I obſerved he poured a quantity of it into a large glaſs, and ſwallowed it greedily. Every thing about his character and manners was forcible and violent; there never was any moderation; many a day did he faſt, many a year did he refrain from wine; but when he did eat, it was voraciouſly; when he did drink wine, it was copiouſly. He could practiſe abſtinence, but not temperance.

Mrs. Thrale and I had a diſpute, whether Shakſpeare or Milton had drawn the moſt admirable picture of a man*. I was for Shak-

* Shakſpeare makes Hamlet thus deſcribe his father:

"See what a grace was ſeated on his brow,
"Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himſelf,
"An eye like Mars, to threaten and command,
"A ſtation like the herald, Mercury,
"New lighted on a Heaven-kiſſing hill:
"A combination and a form indeed,
"Where every god did ſeem to ſet his ſeal,
"To give the world aſſurance of a man."

Milton thus pourtrays our firſt parent, Adam:

"His fair large front and eye ſublime declar'd
"Abſolute rule; and hyacinthin locks
"Round from his parted forelock manly hung
"Cluſt'ring, but not beneath his ſhoulders broad."

ſpeare;

ſpeare; Mrs. Thrale for Milton; and upon a fair hearing, Johnſon decided for my opinion. 1781. Ætat. 72.

I told him of one of Mr. Burke's playful ſallies upon Dean Marlay. "I don't like the Deanery of *Ferns*, it ſounds ſo like a *barren* title."—"Dr. *Heath* ſhould have it;" ſaid I. Johnſon laughed, and condeſcending to trifle in the ſame mode of conceit, ſuggeſted Dr. *Moſs*.

He ſaid, "Mrs. Montagu has dropt me.—Now, Sir, there are people whom one ſhould like very well to drop, but would not wiſh to be dropped by." He certainly was vain of the ſociety of ladies, and could make himſelf very agreeable to them when he choſe it; Sir Joſhua Reynolds agreed with me that he could. Mr. Gibbon, with his uſual ſneer, controverted it, perhaps in reſentment of Johnſon's having talked with ſome diſguſt of his uglineſs, which one ſhould think a *philoſopher* would not mind. Dean Marlay wittily obſerved, "A lady may be vain when ſhe can turn a wolf-dog into a lap-dog."

The election for Ayrſhire, my own county, was this ſpring tried upon a petition, before a Committee of the Houſe of Commons. I was one of the counſel for the ſitting member, and took the liberty of previouſly ſtating different points to Johnſon, who never failed to ſee them clearly, and to ſupply me with ſome good hints. He dictated to me the following note upon the regiſtration of deeds:

"ALL laws are made for the convenience of the community; what is legally done, ſhould be legally recorded, that the ſtate of things may be known, and that wherever evidence is requiſite, evidence may be had. For this reaſon, the obligation to frame and eſtabliſh a legal regiſter is enforced by a legal penalty, which penalty is the want of that perfection and plenitude of right which a regiſter would give.—

1781. Ætat. 72. Thence it follows, that this is not an objection merely legal; for the reaſon on which the law ſtands being equitable, makes it an equitable objection."

"This (ſaid he) you muſt enlarge on, when ſpeaking to the Committee. You muſt not argue there, as if you were arguing in the ſchools; cloſe reaſoning will not fix their attention; you muſt ſay the ſame thing over and over again, in different words. If you ſay it but once, they miſs it in a moment of inattention. It is unjuſt, Sir, to cenſure lawyers for multiplying words when they argue; it is *neceſſary* for them to multiply words."

His notion of the duty of a member of Parliament, ſitting upon an election committee was very high; and when he was told of a gentleman upon one of thoſe committees, who read the newſpapers part of the time, and ſlept the reſt, while the merits of a vote were examined by the counſel, and as an excuſe, when challenged by the chairman for ſuch behaviour, bluntly anſwered, "I had made up my mind upon that caſe." Johnſon, with an indignant contempt, ſaid, "If he was ſuch a rogue as to make up his mind upon a caſe without hearing it, he ſhould not have been ſuch a fool as to tell it."—"I think (ſaid Mr. Dudley Long) the Doctor has pretty plainly made him out to be both rogue and fool."

Johnſon's profound reverence for the Hierarchy made him expect from Biſhops the higheſt degree of decorum; he was offended even at their going to taverns; "A biſhop (ſaid he) has nothing to do at a tipling-houſe. It is not indeed immoral in him to go to a tavern; neither would it be immoral in him to whip a top in Groveſnor-ſquare. But, if he did, I hope the boys would fall upon him and apply the whip to

to *him*. There are gradations in conduct; there is morality—decency—propriety. None of these ſhould be violated by a biſhop. A biſhop ſhould not go to a houſe where he may meet a young fellow leading out a wench." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, every tavern does not admit women." JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, any tavern will admit a well-dreſt man and a well-dreſt woman; they will not perhaps admit a woman whom they ſee every night walking by their door, in the ſtreet. But a well-dreſt man may lead in a well-dreſt woman to any tavern in London. Taverns ſell meat and drink, and will ſell them to any body who can eat and drink. You may as well ſay that a mercer will not ſell ſilks to a woman of the town." 1781. Ætat. 72.

He alſo diſapproved of biſhops going to routs, at leaſt of ſtaying at them longer than preſence commanded reſpect. He mentioned a particular biſhop. "Poh (ſaid Mrs. Thrale) the Biſhop of ———— is never minded at a rout." BOSWELL. "When a biſhop places himſelf in a ſituation where he has no diſtinct character, and is of no conſequence, he degrades the dignity of his order." JOHNSON. "Mr. Boſwell, Madam, has ſaid it as correctly as could be."

Nor was it only in the dignitaries of the Church that Johnſon required a particular decorum and delicacy of behaviour; he juſtly conſidered that the clergy, as men ſet apart for the ſacred office of ſerving at the altar, and impreſſing the minds of men with the aweful concerns of a future ſtate, ſhould be ſomewhat more ſerious than the generality of mankind, and have a ſuitable compoſure of manners. A due ſenſe of the dignity of their profeſſion, independent of higher motives, will ever prevent them from loſing their diſtinction in an indiſcri-

1781. Ætat. 72. minate ſociality; and did ſuch as affect this, know how much it leſſens them in the eyes of thoſe whom they think to pleaſe by it, they would feel themſelves much mortified.

Johnſon, and his friend, Beauclerk, were once together in company with ſeveral clergymen, who thought they ſhould appear to advantage, by aſſuming the lax jollity of *men of the world*; which, as it may be obſerved in ſimilar caſes, they carried to noiſy exceſs. Johnſon, who they expected would be *entertained*, ſate grave and ſilent for ſome time; at laſt, turning to Bleauclerk, he ſaid, by no means in a whiſper, "This merriment of parſons is mighty offenſive."

Even the dreſs of a clergyman ſhould be in character, and nothing can be more deſpicable than conceited attempts at avoiding the appearance of the clerical order; attempts, which are as ineffectual as they are pitiful. Dr. Porteus, now Biſhop of London, in his excellent charge when preſiding over the dioceſe of Cheſter, juſtly animadverts upon this ſubject; and obſerves of a reverend fop, that he "can be but *half a beau*."

Addiſon, in "The Spectator," has given us a fine portrait of a clergyman, who is ſuppoſed to be a member of his *Club*; and Johnſon has exhibited a model, in the character of Mr. Mudge, which has eſcaped the collectors of his works, but which he owned to me, and which indeed he ſhewed to Sir Joſhua Reynolds at the time when it was written. It bears the genuine marks of Johnſon's beſt manner, and is as follows:

"The Reverend Mr. *Zachariah Mudge*, Prebendary of Exeter, and Vicar of St. Andrews in Plymouth; a man equally eminent for his virtues

tues and abilities, and at once beloved as a companion and reverenced as a paſtor. He had that general curioſity to which no kind of knowledge is indifferent or ſuperfluous; and that general benevolence by which no order of men is hated or deſpiſed. 1781. Ætat. 72.

"His principles both of thought and action were great and comprehenſive. By a ſolicitous examination of objections, and judicious compariſon of oppoſite arguments, he attained what enquiry never gives but to induſtry and perſpicuity, a firm and unſhaken ſettlement of conviction. But his firmneſs was without aſperity; for, knowing with how much difficulty truth was ſometimes found, he did not wonder that many miſſed it.

"The general courſe of his life was determined by his profeſſion; he ſtudied the ſacred volumes in the original languages; with what diligence and ſucceſs, his *Notes upon the Pſalms* give ſufficient evidence. He once endeavoured to add the knowlege of Arabick to that of Hebrew; but finding his thoughts too much diverted from other ſtudies, after ſome time, deſiſted from his purpoſe.

"His diſcharge of parochial duties was exemplary. How his *Sermons* were compoſed, may be learned from the excellent volume which he has given to the publick; but how they were delivered, can be known only to thoſe that heard them, for as he appeared in the pulpit, words will not eaſily deſcribe him. His delivery, though unconſtrained, was not negligent, and though forcible, was not turbulent; diſdaining anxious nicety of emphaſis, and laboured artifice of action, it captivated the hearer by its natural dignity, it rouſed the ſluggiſh, and fixed the volatile, and detained the mind upon

1781. Ætat. 72. upon the ſubject, without directing it to the ſpeaker.

"The grandeur and ſolemnity of the preacher did not intrude upon his general behaviour; at the table of his friends he was a companion communicative and attentive, of unaffected manners, of manly cheerfulneſs, willing to pleaſe, and eaſy to be pleaſed. His acquaintance was univerſally ſolicited, and his preſence obſtructed no enjoyment which religion did not forbid. Though ſtudious he was popular; though argumentative he was modeſt; though inflexible he was candid; and though metaphyſical yet orthodox*."

On Friday, March 30, I dined with him at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, with the Earl of Charlemont, Sir Anneſley Stewart, Mr. Eliot, of Port Eliot, Mr. Burke, Dean Marlay, now Biſhop of Clonfert, Mr. Langton; a moſt agreeable day, of which I regret that every circumſtance is not preſerved; but it is unreaſonable to require ſuch a multiplication of felicity.

Mr. Eliot, with whom Dr. Walter Harte had travelled, talked to us of his "Hiſtory of Guſtavus Adolphus," which he ſaid was a very good book in the German tranſlation. JOHNSON. "Harte was exceſſively vain. He put copies of his book in manuſcript into the hands of Lord Cheſterfield and Lord Granville, that they might reviſe it. Now, how abſurd was it to ſuppoſe that two ſuch noblemen would reviſe ſo big a manuſcript. Poor man! he left London the day of the publication of his book, that he might be out of the way of the great

* "London Chronicle," May 2, 1769. This reſpectable man is there mentioned to have died on the 3d of April, that year, at Coffleet, the ſeat of Thomas Veale, Eſq. in his way to London.

praiſe

praiſe he was to receive; and he was aſhamed to return, when he found how ill his book had ſucceeded. It was unlucky in coming out on the ſame day with Robertſon's 'Hiſtory of Scotland.' His huſbandry, however, is good."—BOSWELL. "So he was fitter for that than for heroick hiſtory. He did well then he turned his ſword into a ploughſhare." 1781. Ætat. 72.

Mr. Eliot mentioned a curious liquor peculiar to his country, which the Corniſh fiſhermen drink. They call it *Mahogany*; and it is made of two parts gin, and one part treacle, well beat together. I begged to have ſome of it made, which was done with proper ſkill by Mr. Eliot. I thought it very good liquor; and ſaid it was a counterpart of what is called *Athol Porridge* in the Highlands of Scotland, which is a mixture of whiſkey and honey. Johnſon ſaid that muſt be better liquor than the Corniſh, for both its component parts are better." He alſo obſerved, "*Mahogany* muſt be a modern name; for it is not long ſince the wood called Mahogany was known in this country." I mentioned his ſcale of liquors;—claret for boys—port for men—brandy for heroes. "Then (ſaid Mr. Burke) let me have claret: I love to be a boy; to have the careleſs gaiety of boyiſh days." JOHNSON. "I ſhould drink claret too, if it would give me that; but it does not: it neither makes boys men, nor men boys. You'll be drowned by it before it has any effect upon you."

I ventured to mention a ludicruous paragraph in the news-papers, that Dr. Johnſon was learning to dance of Veſtris. Lord Charlemont, wiſhing to excite him to talk, propoſed, in a whiſper, that he ſhould be aſked, whether it was true. "Shall I aſk him?" ſaid his Lordſhip. We were, by a great majority, clear for the experiment.

1781. Ætat. 72. experiment. Upon which his Lordſhip very gravely and with a courteous air ſaid, "Pray, Sir, is it true that you are taking leſſons of Veſtris?" This was riſking a good deal, and required the boldneſs of a General of Iriſh Volunteers to make the attempt. Johnſon was at firſt ſtartled, and in ſome heat anſwered,—How can your Lordſhip aſk ſo ſimple a queſtion?" But immediately recovering himſelf, whether from unwillingneſs to be deceived, or to appear deceived, or whether from real good humour he kept up the joke: "Nay, but if any body were to anſwer the paragraph, and contradict it, I'd have replied, that he who contradicted it was no friend either to Veſtris or me. For why ſhould not Dr. Johnſon add to his other powers a little corporeal agility? Socrates learnt to dance at an advanced age, and Cato learnt Greek at an advanced age. Then it might proceed to ſay, that this Johnſon, not content with dancing on the ground, might dance on the rope; and they might introduce the elephant dancing on the rope. A nobleman wrote a play, called "Love in a hollow Tree.' He found out that that it was a bad one, and therefore wiſhed to buy up all the copies, and burn them. The Ducheſs of Marlborough had kept one; and when he was againſt her at an election, ſhe had a new edition of it printed, and prefixed to it, as a frontiſpiece, an elephant dancing on a rope; to ſhew, that his Lordſhip's writing comedy was as aukward as an elephant dancing on a rope."

On Sunday, April 1, I dined with him at Mr. Thrale's, with Sir Philip Jennings Clerk and Mr. Perkins, who had the ſuperintendance of Mr. Thrale's brewery, with a ſalary of five hundred pounds a year. Sir Philip had the appearance of a gentleman of ancient family, well advanced in life. He wore his own white hair

in

in a bag of goodly ſize, a black velvet coat, with an embroidered waiſtcoat, and very rich laced ruffles; which Mrs. Thrale ſaid were old faſhioned, but which, for that reaſon, I thought the more reſpectable, more like a Tory; yet Sir Philip was then in oppoſition in parliament. "Ah, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) ancient ruffles and modern principles do not agree."—Sir Philip defended the oppoſition to the American war ably and with temper, and I joined him. He ſaid, the majority of the nation was againſt the miniſtry. JOHNSON. "*I*, Sir, am againſt the miniſtry; but it is for having too little of that of which oppoſition thinks they have too much. Were I miniſter, if any man wagged his finger againſt me, he ſhould be turned out; for that which it is in the powder of Government to give at pleaſure to one or another, ſhould be given to the ſupporters of Government. If you will not oppoſe at the expence of loſing your place, your oppoſition will not be honeſt, you will feel no ſerious grievance; and preſent oppoſition is only a conteſt to get what others have. Sir Robert Walpole acted as I would do. As to the American war, the *ſenſe* of the nation is *with* the miniſtry. The majority of thoſe who can *underſtand* is with it; the majority of thoſe who can only *hear* is againſt it; and thoſe who can only hear are more numerous than thoſe who can underſtand, and oppoſition is always loudeſt, a majority of the rabble will be for oppoſition." 1781. Ætat. 72.

This boiſterous vivacity entertained us; but the fact really was, that thoſe who could underſtand the beſt, were againſt the American war, as almoſt every man now is, when the queſtion has been cooly conſidered.

Mrs.

1781. Mrs. Thrale gave high praiſe to a gentleman of our acquaintance. JOHNSON. "Nay, my Ætat. 72. dear lady don't talk ſo. Mr. ****'s character is very *ſhort*. It is nothing. He fills a chair. He is a man of genteel appearance, and that is all. I know nobody who blaſts by praiſe as you do: for whenever there is exaggerated praiſe every one is ſet againſt the character. They are provoked to attack it. Now there is *****: you praiſed that man with ſuch diſproportion, that I was incited to leſſen him, perhaps more than he deſerves. His blood is upon your head. By the ſame principle, your malice defeats itſelf; for your cenſure is too violent. And yet (looking to her with a leering ſmile) ſhe is the firſt woman in the world could ſhe but reſtrain that wicked tongue of hers—ſhe would be the only woman could ſhe but command that little whirligig."

Upon the ſubject of exaggerated praiſe I took the liberty to ſay, that I thought there might be very high praiſe given to a known character which deſerved it, and therefore it would not be exaggerated. Thus, one might ſay of Mr. Edmund Burke, He is a very wonderful man. JOHNSON. "No, Sir, you would not be ſafe if another man had a mind perverſely to contradict.———He might anſwer, Where is all the wonder? Burke is, to be ſure, a man of uncommon abilities, with a great quantity of matter in his mind, and a great fluency of language in his mouth. But we are not to be ſtunned and aſtoniſhed by him. So you ſee, Sir, even Burke would ſuffer, not from any fault of his own, but from your folly."

Mrs. Thrale mentioned a gentleman who had acquired a fortune of four thouſand a year in trade, but was abſolutely miſerable, becauſe he could

could not talk in company; ſo miſerable, that he was impelled to lament his ſituation in the ſtreet to *****, whom he hates, and who he knows deſpiſes him. "I am a moſt unhappy man (ſaid he). I am invited to converſations. I go to your converſations; but, alas! I have no converſation." JOHNSON. "Man commonly cannot be ſucceſsful in different ways. This gentleman has ſpent in getting four thouſand a year, the time in which he might have learnt to talk; and now he cannot talk." Mr. Perkins made a ſhrewd and droll remark: "If he had got his four thouſand a year as a mountebank he might have learnt to talk at the ſame time that he was getting his fortune." 1781. Ætat. 72.

Some other gentlemen came in. The converſation concerning the perſon whoſe character Dr. Johnſon treated ſo ſlightingly, as he did not know his merit, was reſumed. Mrs. Thrale ſaid, "You think ſo of him, Sir, becauſe he is quiet, and does not exert himſelf with force. You'll be ſaying the ſame thing of Mr. ***** there, who ſits as quiet—" This was not well bred; and Johnſon did not let it paſs without correction. "Nay, Madam, what right have you to talk thus? Both Mr. ***** and I have reaſon to take it ill. *You* may talk ſo of Mr. *****: but why do you make *me* do it. Have I ſaid any thing againſt Mr. *****. You have *ſet* him, that I might ſhoot him: but I have not ſhot him."

One of the gentlemen ſaid, he had ſeen three folio volumes of Dr. Johnſon's ſayings collected by me. "I muſt put you right, Sir, (ſaid I); for I am very exact in authenticity. You could not ſee folio volumes, for I have none: you might have ſeen ſome in quarto and octavo.—This is inattention which one ſhould guard againſt." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is a want of concern

1781. cern about veracity. He does not know that he
Ætat. 72. saw *any* volume. If he had seen them he could have remembered their size."

Mr. Thrale appeared very lethargick to-day. I saw him again on Monday evening, at which time he was not thought to be in immediate danger; but early in the morning of Wednesday the 4th, he expired. Johnson was in the house, and thus mentions the event: "I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time upon the face that for fifteen years had never been turned upon me but with respect and benignity*." Upon that day there was a *Call* of the LITERARY CLUB; but Johnson apologised for his absence by the following note:

"MR. JOHNSON knows that Sir Joshua Reynolds and the other Gentlemen will excuse his incompliance with the Call, when they are told that Mr. Thrale died this morning."

"Wednesday."

Mr. Thrale's death was a very essential loss to Johnson, who, although he did not foresee all that afterwards happened, was sufficiently convinced that the comforts which Mr. Thrale's family afforded him would now in a great measure cease. He, however, continued to shew a kind attention to his widow and children as long as it was acceptable; and he took upon him, with a very earnest concern, the office of one of his executors, the importance of which seemed greater than usual to him, from his circumstances having been always such that he had scarcely any share in the real business of life. His friends

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 191.

of

of the CLUB were in hopes that Mr. Thrale might have made a liberal provision for him for his life, which, as Mr. Thrale left no son, and a very large fortune, it would have been highly to his honour to have done; and, considering Dr. Johnson's age, could not have been of long duration: but he bequeathed him only two hundred pounds, which was the legacy given to each of his executors. I could not but be somewhat diverted by hearing Johnson talk in a pompous manner of his new office, and particularly of the concerns of the brewery, which it was at last resolved should be sold. Lord Lucan tells a very good story, which, if not precisely exact, is certainly characteristical: that when the sale of Thrale's brewery was going forward, Johnson appeared bustling about, with an ink-horn and pen in his button-hole, like an exciseman; and on being asked what he really considered to be the value of the property which was to be disposed of, answered, "We are not here to sell a parcel of boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich, beyond the dream of avarice." 1781. Ætat. 72.

On Friday, April 6, he carried me to dine at a club, which, at his desire, had been lately formed at the Queen's Arms, in St. Paul's Church-yard. He told Mr. Hoole, that he wished to have a *City Club*, and asked him to collect one; but, said he, "Don't let them be *patriots*." The company to-day were very sensible well-behaved men. I have preserved only two particulars of his conversation. He said he was glad Lord George Gordon had escaped, rather than that a precedent should be established for hanging a man for *constructive treason*; which, in consistency with his true, manly, constitutional Toryism, he considered would be a dange-

1781. Æt. 72. a dangerous engine of arbitrary power. And upon its being mentioned that an opulent and very indolent Scotch nobleman, who totally reſigned the management of his affairs to a man of knowledge and abilities, had claimed ſome merit by ſaying, "The next beſt thing to managing a man's own affairs well, is being ſenſible of incapacity, and not attempting it, but having full confidence in one who can do it.'; JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, this is paltry. There is a middle courſe. Let a man give application, and depend upon it he will ſoon get above a deſpicable ſtate of helpleſneſs, and attain the power of acting for himſelf."

On Saturday, April 7, I dined with him at a Mr. Hoole's, with Governour Boucher and Captain Orme, both of whom had been long in the Eaſt Indies; and being men of good ſenſe and obſervation, were very entertaining. Johnſon defended the oriental regulation of different *caſts* of men, which was objected to as totally deſtructive of the hopes of riſing in ſociety by perſonal merit. He ſhewed that there was a *principle* in it ſufficiently plauſible by analogy. "We ſee (ſaid he) in metals there are different ſpecies; and ſo likewiſe in animals, though one ſpecies may not differ very widely from another, as in the ſpecies of dogs—the cur, the ſpaniel, the maſtiff. The Bramins are the maſtiffs of mankind."

On Thurſday, April 12, I dined with him at a Biſhop's, where were Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Mr. Berrenger, and ſome more company. He had dined the day before at another Biſhop's. I have unfortunately recorded none of his converſation at the Biſhop's where we dined together: but I have preſerved his ingenious defence of his dining twice abroad in Paſſion-week;

week; a laxity, in which I am convinced he would not have indulged himſelf at the time when he wrote this ſolemn paper in "The Rambler," upon that aweful ſeaſon. It appeared to me, that by being much more in company, and enjoying more luxurious living, he had contracted a keener reliſh of pleaſure, and was conſequently leſs rigorous in his religious rites. This he would not acknowledge; but he reaſoned with admirable ſophiſtry, as follows: "Why, Sir, a Biſhop's calling company together in this week, is, to uſe the vulgar phraſe, not *the thing*. But you muſt conſider laxity is a bad thing;—but preciſeneſs is alſo a bad thing; and your general character may be more hurt by preciſeneſs than by dining with a Biſhop in Paſſion-week. There might be a handle for reflection. It might be ſaid, 'He refuſed to dine with a Biſhop in Paſſion-week, but was three Sundays abſent from church." BOSWELL. "Very true, Sir.—But ſuppoſe a man to be uniformly of good conduct, would it not be better that he ſhould refuſe to dine with a Biſhop in this week, and ſo not encourage a bad practiſe by his example?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, you are to conſider whether you might not do more harm by leſſening the influence of a Biſhop's character by your diſapprobation in refuſing him, than by going to him." 1781. Ætat. 72.

To Mrs. LUCY PORTER, *in Lichfield.*

"DEAR MADAM,

"LIFE is full of troubles. I have juſt loſt my dear friend Thrale. I hope he is happy, but I have had a great loſs. I am otherwiſe pretty well. I require much care myſelf, but that

1781. Æt. 72. that care is not ineffectual; and when I am out of order I think it often my own fault.

"The ſpring is now making quick advances. As it is the ſeaſon in which the whole world is enlivened and invigorated, I hope that both you and I ſhall partake of its benefits. My deſire is to ſee Lichfield; but being left executor to my friend, I know not whether I can be ſpared; but I will try, for it is now long ſince we ſaw one another, and how little we can promiſe ourſelves many more interviews, we are taught by hourly examples of mortality. Let us try to live ſo as that mortality may not be an evil. Write to me ſoon, my deareſt; your letters will give me great pleaſure.

"I am ſorry that Mr. Porter has not had his box; but by ſending it to Mr. Mathias, who very readily undertook its conveyance, I did the beſt I could, and perhaps before now he has it.

"Be ſo kind as to make my compliments to my friends; I have a great value for their kindneſs, and hope to enjoy it before ſummer is paſt. Do write to me. I am, deareſt love,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"London, April 12, 1781. SAM. JOHNSON."

On Friday, April 13, being Good-Friday, I went to St. Clement's-church with him, as uſual. There I ſaw again his old fellow-collegian, Edwards, to whom I ſaid, "I think Sir, Dr. Johnſon and you meet only at church."—— "Sir, (ſaid he) it is the beſt place we can meet except in Heaven, and I hope we ſhall meet there too." Dr. Johnſon told me that there was very little communication between Edwards and him, after their unexpected renewal of acquaintance. "But (ſaid he, ſmiling) he met me once, and ſaid, 'I am told you have written

ten a very pretty book called *The Rambler*.' I was unwilling that he ſhould leave the world in total darkneſs, and ſent him a ſet." 1781. Ætat. 72.

Mr. Berrenger viſited him to-day, and was very pleaſing. We talked of an evening ſociety for converſation at a houſe in town, of which we were all members, but of which Johnſon ſaid, "It will never do, Sir. There is nothing ſerved about there, neither tea, nor coffee, nor lemonade, nor any thing whatever; and depend upon it, Sir, a man does not love to go to a place from whence he comes out exactly as he went in." I endeavoured for argument's ſake, to maintain that men of learning and talents might have very good intellectual ſociety, without the aid of any little gratifications of the ſenſes. Berrenger joined with Johnſon, and ſaid that without theſe any meeting would be dull and inſipid. He would therefore have all the ſlight refreſhments; nay, it would not be amiſs to have ſome cold meat, and a bottle of wine upon a ſide-board. "Sir, (ſaid Johnſon to me, with an air of triumph,) Mr. Berrenger knows the world. Every body loves to have good things furniſhed to them without any trouble. I told Mrs. Thrale once, that as ſhe did not chooſe to have card-tables, ſhe ſhould have a profuſion of the beſt ſweetmeats, and ſhe would be ſure to have company enough come to her." The event proved the juſtice of Johnſon's opinion, as to the impracticability of getting people to meet, when they know there is abſolutely nothing to touch the palate; for this Society, though held at the houſe of a perſon deſervedly much eſteemed, and compoſed of very eminent men, could not be preſerved from gradual decay.

1781. Ætat. 72. On Sunday, April 15, being Eaſter-day, after ſolemn worſhip in St. Paul's church, I found him alone; Dr. Scott, of the Commons, came. He talked of its having been ſaid, that Addiſon wrote ſome of his beſt papers in "The Spectator," when warm with wine. Dr. Johnſon did not ſeem willing to admit this. Dr. Scott, as a confirmation of it related, that Blackſtone compoſed his "Commentaries" with a bottle of port before him.

I told him, that in a company where I had lately been, a deſire was expreſſed to know his authority for the ſhocking ſtory of Addiſon's ſending an execution into Steele's houſe. "Sir, (ſaid he) it is generally known to all who are acquainted with the literary hiſtory of that period. It is as well known, as that he wrote 'Cato." Mr. Thomas Sheridan once defended Addiſon to me, by alledging that he did it in order to cover Steele's goods from other creditors that were going to ſeize them.

We talked of the difference between the mode of education at Oxford, and that in the Colleges, where inſtruction is chiefly conveyed by lectures. JOHNSON. "Lectures were once uſeful; but now, when all can read, and books are ſo numerous, lectures are unneceſſary. If your attention fails, and you miſs a part of a lecture, it is loſt, you cannot go back as you do upon a book." Dr. Scott agreed with him. "But yet (ſaid I) Dr. Scott, you yourſelf gave lectures at Oxford." He ſmiled. "You laughed (then ſaid I) at thoſe who came to you."

Dr. Scott left us, and ſoon afterwards we went to dinner. Our company conſiſted of Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Deſmoulins, Mr. Levett, Mr. Allen, the printer, and Mrs. Hall, ſiſter of the Reverend John Weſley, and reſembling him, as I thought,

I thought, both in figure and manner. Johnſon, produced now, for the firſt time, ſome handſome ſilver ſalvers, which he told me he had bought fourteen years ago; ſo it was a great day. I was not a little amuſed by obſerving Allen perpetually ſtruggling to talk in the manner of Johnſon, like the little frog in the fable, blowing himſelf up to reſemble the ſtately ox. 1781. Ætat. 72.

I mentioned a kind of religious Robinhood Society, which met every Sunday evening at Coachmaker's-hall, for free debate; and that the ſubject for this night was, the text which relates, with other miracles, which happened at our SAVIOUR's death, "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the ſaints which ſlept aroſe, and came out of the graves after his reſurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Mrs. Hall ſaid it was a very curious ſubject, and ſhe ſhould like to hear it diſcuſſed. JOHNSON. (ſomewhat warmly)—"One would not go to ſuch a place to hear it—one would not be ſeen in ſuch a place—to give countenance to ſuch a meeting." I, however, reſolved that I would go. "But Sir, (ſaid ſhe to Johnſon,) I ſhould like to hear *you* diſcuſs it." He ſeemed reluctant to engage in it.—She talked of the reſurrection of the human race in general, and maintained that we ſhall be raiſed with the ſame bodies. JOHNSON. "Nay, Madam, we ſee that it is not to be the ſame body; for the Scripture uſes the illuſtration of grain ſown, and we know that the grain which grows, is not the ſame with what is ſown. You cannot ſuppoſe that we ſhall riſe with a diſeaſed body; it is enough if there be ſuch a ſameneſs as to diſtinguiſh indentity of perſon." She ſeemed deſirous of knowing more, but he left the queſtion in obſcurity.

1781. Ætat. 72. Of apparitions, he obſerved, "A total diſbelief of them is averſe to the opinion of the exiſtence of the ſoul between death and the laſt day; the queſtion ſimply is, whether departed ſpirits ever have the power of making themſelves perceptible to us; a man who thinks he has ſeen an apparition, can only be convinced himſelf; his authority will not convince another, and his conviction, if rational, muſt be founded on being told ſomething which cannot be known but by ſupernatural means."

He mentioned a thing as not unfrequent, of which I had never heard before—being *called*, that is, hearing one's name pronounced by the voice of a known perſon at a great diſtance, far beyond the poſſibility of being reached by any ſound, uttered by human organs. "An acquaintance, on whoſe veracity I can depend, told me, that walking home one evening to Kilmarnock, he heard himſelf called from a wood, by the voice of a brother who had gone to America; and the next packets brought accounts of that brother's death." Macbean aſſerted that this inexplicable *calling* was a thing very well known. Dr. Johnſon ſaid, that one day at Oxford, as he was turning the key of his chamber, he heard his mother diſtinctly call *Sam.* She was then at Lichfield; but nothing enſued. This phænomenon is, I think, as wonderful as any other myſterious fact, which many people are very ſlow to believe, or rather indeed, reject with an obſtinate contempt.

Some time after this, upon his making a remark which eſcaped my attention, Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Hall were both together ſtriving to anſwer him. He grew angry, and called out loudly, 'Nay, when you both ſpeak at once it is intolerable." But checking himſelf and ſoften-

ing,

ing, he ſaid, "This one may ſay, though you *are* ladies." Then he brightened into gay humour, and addreſſed them in the words of one of the ſongs in "The Beggar's Opera," 1781. Ætat. 72.

"But two at a time there's no mortal can bear."

"What, Sir, (ſaid I,) are you going to turn Captain Macheath?" There was ſomething as pleaſantly ludicrous in this ſcene as can be imagined. The contraſt between Macheath, Polly and Lucy—and Dr. Samuel Johnſon, blind, peeviſh Mrs. Williams, and lean, lank, preaching Mrs. Hall, was exquiſite.

I ſtole away to Coachmaker's-hall, and heard the difficult text of which we had talked, diſcuſſed with great decency, and ſome intelligence, by ſeveral ſpeakers. There was a difference of opinion as to the appearance of ghoſts in modern times, though the arguments for it, ſupported by Mr. Addiſon's authority, preponderated.—The immediate ſubject of debate was embarraſſed by the *bodies* of the ſaints having been ſaid to riſe, and by the queſtion what became of them afterwards; did they return to their graves? Or were they tranſlated to Heaven? Only one evangeliſt mentions the fact*, and the commentators whom I have looked at, do not make the paſſage clear. There is, however, no occaſion for our underſtanding it farther, than to know that it was one of the extraordinary manifeſtations of divine power, which accompanied the moſt important event that ever happened.

On Friday, April 20, I ſpent with him one of the happieſt days that I remember to have enjoyed in the whole courſe of my life. Mrs.

* St. Mathew, chap. xxvii. v. 52, 53.

Garrick,

1781. Ætat. 72. Garrick, whoſe grief for the loſs of her huſband was, I believe, as ſincere as wounded affection and admiration could produce, had this day, for the firſt time ſince his death, a ſelect party of his friends to dine with her. The company was Miſs Hannah More, who lived with her, and whom ſhe called her Chaplain; Mrs. Boſcawen, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Dr. Burney, Dr. Johnſon, and myſelf. We found ourſelves very elegantly entertained at her houſe in the Adelphi, where I have paſſed many a pleaſing hour with him "who gladdened life." She looked very well, talked of her huſband with complacency, and while ſhe caſt her eyes on his portrait, which hung over the chimney-piece, ſaid, that "death was now the moſt agreeable object to her." The very ſemblance of David Garrick was cheering. Mr. Beauclerk with happy propriety, inſcribed under that fine portrait of him, which by Lady Diana's kindneſs is now the property of my friend Mr. Langton, the following paſſage from his beloved Shakſpeare:

"———————— A merrier man,
"Within the limit of becoming mirth,
"I never ſpent an hour's talk withal.
"His eye begets occaſion for his wit;
"For ev'ry object that the one doth catch,
"The other turns to a mirth-moving jeſt;
"Which his fair tongue (Conceit's expoſitor)
"Delivers in ſuch apt and gracious words,
"That aged ears play truant at his tales,
"And younger hearings are quite raviſhed;
"So ſweet and voluble is his diſcourſe."

We were all in fine ſpirits; and I whiſpered to Mrs. Boſcawen, "I believe this is as much

as

as can be made of life." In addition to a ſplendid entertainment, we were regaled with Lichfield ale, which had a peculiar appropriated value. Sir Joſhua, and Dr. Burney, and I, drank cordially of it to Dr. Johnſon's health; and though he would not join us, he as cordially anſwered, "Gentlemen, I wiſh you all as well as you do me." 1781. Ætat. 72

The general effect of this day dwells upon my mind in fond remembrance; but I do not find much converſation recorded. What I have preſerved ſhall be faithfully given.

Somebody mentioned Mr. Thomas Hollis, the ſtrenuous whig, who uſed to ſend over Europe preſents of democratical books, with their boards ſtamped with daggers and caps of liberty. Mrs. Carter ſaid, "He was a bad man.—He uſed to talk uncharitably." JOHNSON.—"Poh! poh! Madam; who is the worſe for being talked of uncharitably? Beſides, he was a dull poor creature as ever lived. And I believe he would not have done harm to a man whom he knew to be of very oppoſite principles to his own. I remember once at the Society of Arts, when an advertiſement was to be drawn up, he pointed me out as the man who could do it beſt. This you will obſerve was kindneſs to me. I however ſlipt away and eſcaped it."

Mrs. Carter having ſaid of a certain perſon, "I doubt he was an Atheiſt." JOHNSON. "I don't know that. He might perhaps have become one, if he had had time to ripen, (ſmiling). He might have *exuberated* into an Atheiſt."

Sir Joſhua Reynolds praiſed "Mudge's Sermons." JOHNSON. "Mudge's Sermons' are good, but not practical. He graſps more ſenſe than he can hold. He takes more corn than he can make into meal; he opens a wide proſpect, but

1781. Ætat. 72. but it is ſo diſtant, it is indiſtinct. I love 'Blair's Sermons.' Though the dog is a Scotchman, and a Preſbyterian, and every thing he ſhould not be, I was the firſt to praiſe them. Such was my candour." (ſmiling). Mrs. BOSCAWEN.—"Such his great merit to get the better of all your prejudices." JOHNSON. "Why, Madam, let us compound the matter; let us aſcribe it to my candour, and his merit."

In the evening we had a large company in the drawing-room, ſeveral ladies, the Biſhop of Killaloe, Dr. Percy, Mr. Chamberlayne, of the treaſury, &c. &c. Somebody ſaid the life of a mere literary man could not be very entertaining. JOHNSON. "But it certainly may, this is a remark which has been made, and repeated, without juſtice; why ſhould the life of a literary man be leſs entertaining than the life of any other man? Are there not as intereſting varieties in ſuch a life? As *a literary life* it may be very entertaining." BOSWELL. "But it muſt be better ſurely, when it is diverſified with a little active variety—ſuch as his having gone to Jamaica;—or—his having gone to the Hebrides."—Johnſon was not diſpleaſed at this.

Talking of a very reſpectable authour, he told us a very curious circumſtance in his life, which was, that he had married a printer's devil. REYNOLDS. "A printer's devil, Sir! Why, I thought a printer's devil was a creature with a black face and in rags." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir. But I ſuppoſe, he had her face waſhed, and put clean clothes on her. (Then looking very ſerious, and very earneſt) And ſhe did not diſgrace him—the woman had a bottom of good ſenſe." The word *bottom* thus introduced, was ſo ludicrous, when contraſted with his gravity, that moſt of us could not forbear tittering and laughing,

ing, though I recollect that the Biſhop of Killaloe kept his countenance with perfect ſteadineſs, while Miſs Hannah More ſlyly hid her face behind a lady's back who ſate on the ſame ſettee with her. His pride could not bear that any expreſſion of his ſhould excite ridicule, when he did not intend it; he therefore reſolved to aſſume and exerciſe deſpotick power, glanced ſternly around, and called out in a ſtrong tone, "Where's the merriment?" Then collecting himſelf, and looking aweful, to make us feel how he could impoſe reſtraint, and as it were ſearching his mind for a more ludicrous word, he ſlowly pronounced, "I ſay the *woman* was *fundamentally* ſenſible;" as if he had ſaid, hear this now, and laugh if you dare. We all ſat compoſed as at a funeral. 1781. Ætat. 72.

He and I walked away together; we ſtopped a little while by the rails of the Adelphi, looking on the Thames, and I ſaid to him with tenderneſs, that I thought of two friends we had loſt, who once lived in the building behind us, Beauclerk and Garrick. "Aye, Sir, (ſaid he, tenderly,) and two ſuch friends as cannot be ſupplied."

For ſome time after this day I did not ſee him very often, and of the converſation which I did enjoy, I am ſorry to find I have preſerved but very little. I was at this time engaged in a variety of other matters, which required exertion and aſſiduity, and neceſſarily occupied all my time.

One day having ſpoken very freely of thoſe who were then in power, he ſaid to me, "Between ourſelves, Sir, I do not like to give oppoſition the ſatisfaction of knowing how much I diſapprove of the miniſtry." And when I mentioned that Mr. Burke had boaſted how quiet

1781. quiet the nation was in George the Second's reign, when Whigs were in power, compared Ætat. 72. with the preſent reign, when Tories governed. "Why, Sir, (ſaid he) you are to conſider that Tories having more reverence for government, will not oppoſe with the ſame violence as Whigs, who being unreſtrained by that principle, will oppoſe by any means."

This month he loſt not only Mr. Thrale, but another friend, Mr. William Strahan, junior, printer, the eldeſt ſon of his old and conſtant friend, printer to his Majeſty.

To Mrs. STRAHAN.

"DEAR MADAM,

"THE grief which I feel for the loſs of a very kind friend is ſufficient to make me know how much you muſt ſuffer by the death of an amiable ſon; a man, of whom I think it may truly be ſaid, that no one knew him who does not lament him. I look upon myſelf as having a friend, another friend taken from me.

"Comfort, dear Madam, I would give you if I could, but I know how little the forms of conſolation can avail. Let me, however, counſel you not to waſte your health in unprofitable ſorrow, but go to Bath, and endeavour to prolong your own life, but when we have done all that we can, one friend muſt in time loſe the other. I am, dear madam,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"April 23, 1781. SAM. JOHNSON."

On Tueſday, May 8, I had the pleaſure of again dining with him and Mr. Wilkes, at Mr. Dilly's.

Dilly's. No *negotiation* was now required to bring them together; for Johnſon was ſo well ſatisfied with the former interview, that he was very glad to meet Wilkes again, who was this day ſeated between Dr. Beattie and Dr. Johnſon, (between Truth and Reaſon, as General Paoli ſaid, when I told him of it.) WILKES. "I have been thinking, Dr. Johnſon, that there ſhould be a bill brought into parliament that the controverted elections for Scotland ſhould be tried in that country, at their own Abbey of Holy-Rood Houſe, and not here; for the conſequence of trying them here is, that we have an inundation of Scotchmen, who come up and never go back again. Now here is Boſwell, who has come up on the election for his own county, which will not laſt a fortnight. JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, I ſee no reaſon why they ſhould be tried at all; for, you know, one Scotchman is as good as another." WILKES. "Pray, Boſwell, how much may be got in a year by an Advocate at the Scotch bar? BOSWELL. "I believe two thouſand pounds." WILKES, "How can it be poſſible to ſpend that money in Scotland?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, the money may be ſpent in England: but there is a harder queſtion. If one man in Scotland gets poſſeſſion of two thouſand pounds, what remains for all the reſt of the nation?" WILKES. "You know, in the laſt war, the immenſe booty which Thurot carried off from the complete plunder of ſeven Scotch iſles. He re-imbarked with *three and ſix pence*." Here again Johnſon and Wilkes joined in extravagant ſportive raillery upon the ſuppoſed poverty of Scotland, which Dr. Beattie and I did not think it worth our while to diſpute. 1781. Ætat. 72.

The ſubject of quotation being introduced, Mr. Wilkes cenſured it as pedantry. JOHNSON. "No,

1781. "No, Sir, it is a good thing; there is a commu-
nity of mind in it. Claſſical quotation is the
Ætat. 72. *parole* of literary men all over the world." WILKES. "Upon the continent they all quote the vulgate bible. Shakſpeare is chiefly quoted here; and we quote alſo Pope, Prior, Butler, Waller, and ſometimes Cowley."

We talked of letter-writing. JOHNSON. "It is now become ſo much the faſhion to publiſh letters, that in order to avoid it, I put as little into mine as I can. BOSWELL. "Do you what you will, Sir, you cannot avoid it. Should you even write as ill as you can, your letters would be publiſhed as curioſities.

'Behold a miracle! inſtead of wit
'See two dull lines with Stanhope's pencil writ."

He gave us an entertaining account of *Bet Flint*, a woman of the town, who, with ſome eccentrick talents and much effrontery, forced herſelf upon his acquaintance. "Bet (ſaid he) wrote her own life in verſe*, which ſhe brought to me, wiſhing that I would furniſh her with a preface to it (laughing). I uſed to ſay of her, that ſhe was generally ſlut and drunkard—occaſionally, whore and thief. She had, however, genteel lodgings, a ſpinnet on which ſhe played, and a boy that walked before her chair. Poor Bet

* Johnſon, whoſe memory was wonderfully retentive, remembered the firſt four lines of this curious production, which have been communicated to me by a young lady of his acquaintance:

"When firſt I drew my vital breath,
"A little minikin I came upon earth;
"And then I came from a dark abode,
"Into this gay and gaudy world."

was

was taken up on a charge of ſtealing a counterpane, and tried at the Old-Bailey. Chief Juſtice ———, who loved a wench, ſummed up favourably, and ſhe was acquitted. After which, Bet ſaid, with a gay and ſatisfied air, 'Now that the counterpane is *my own*, I ſhall make a petticoat of it." 1781. Ætat. 72.

Talking of oratory, Mr. Wilkes deſcribed it as accompanied with all the charms of poetical expreſſion. JOHNSON. "No, Sir; oratory is the power of beating down your adverſary's arguments, and putting better in their place." WILKES. "But this does not move the paſſions." JOHNSON. "He muſt be a weak man who is to be ſo moved." WILKES. (naming a celebrated orator) "Amidſt all the brilliancy of ———'s imagination, and the exuberance of his wit, there is a ſtrange want of *taſte*. It was obſerved of Apelles's Venus, that her fleſh ſeemed as if ſhe had been nouriſhed by roſes: his oratory would ſometimes make one ſuſpect that he eats potatoes and drinks whiſky."

Mr. Wilkes obſerved, how tenacious we are of forms in this country, and gave us an inſtance, the vote of the Houſe of Commons for remitting money to pay the army in America *in Portugal pieces*, when, in reality, the remittance is made not in Portugal money but in our own ſpecie. JOHNSON. "Is there not a law, Sir, againſt exporting the current coin of the realm?" WILKES. "Yes, Sir: but might not the Houſe of Commons, in caſe of real evident neceſſity, order our own current coin to be ſent into our own colonies?" Here Johnſon, with that quickneſs of recollection which diſtinguiſhed him ſo eminently, gave the *Middleſex Patriot* an admirable retort upon his own ground. "Sure, Sir, *you* don't think a *reſolution of the Houſe of Commons*

1781. Ætat. 72. *mons* equal to *the law of the land.*" WILKES. (at once perceiving the application) "GOD forbid, Sir."—To hear what had been treated with ſuch violence in "The Falſe Alarm," now turned into pleaſant repartee, was extremely agreeable. Johnſon went on—"Locke obſerves well, that a prohibition to export the current coin is impolitick; for when the balance of trade happens to be againſt a ſtate, the current coin *muſt* be exported."

Mr. Beauclerk's great library was this ſeaſon ſold in London by auction. Mr. Wilkes ſaid, he wondered to find in it ſuch a numerous collection of ſermons, ſeeming to think it ſtrange that a gentleman of Mr. Beauclerk's character in the gay world, ſhould have choſen to have many compoſitions of that kind. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, you are to conſider, that ſermons make a conſiderable branch of Engliſh literature; ſo that a library muſt be very imperfect if it has not a numerous collection of ſermons*: and

* Mr. Wilkes probably did not know that there is in an Engliſh ſermon the moſt comprehenſive and lively account of that entertaining faculty, for which he himſelf is ſo much admired. It is in Dr. Barrow's firſt volume, and fourteenth ſermon, "*Againſt fooliſh Talking and Jeſting.*" My old acquaintance, the late Corbyn Morris, in his ingenious "Eſſay on Wit, Humour, and Ridicule," calls it "a *profuſe* deſcription of Wit;" but I do not ſee how it could be curtailed, without leaving out ſome good circumſtances of diſcrimination. As it is not generally known, and may perhaps diſpoſe ſome to read ſermons, from which they may receive real advantage, while looking only for entertainment, I ſhall here quote it.

"But firſt (ſays the learned preacher) it may be demanded what the thing we ſpeak of is? Or what this facetiouſneſs (or *wit*, as he calls it before,) doth import? To which queſtions I might reply, as Democritus did to him that aſked the definition of a man, 'Tis that which we all ſee and know.' Any one better apprehends what it is by acquaintance,

and in all collections, Sir, the desire of augmenting it grows stronger in proportion to the advance in acquisition; as motion is accelerated by the continuance of the impetus. Besides, Sir, (looking at Mr. Wilkes with a placid but significant smile,) a man may collect sermons with intention of making himself better by them. I hope Mr. Beauclerk intended, that some time or other that should be the case with him." 1781. Ætat. 72.

Mr. Wilkes said to me, loud enough for Dr. Johnson to hear, "Dr. Johnson should make me a present of his 'Lives of the Poets,' as I am a poor patriot who cannot afford to buy them." Johnson seemed to take no notice of this hint; but in a little while, he called to Mr. Dilly,

tance, than I can inform him by description. It is, indeed, a thing so versatile and multiform, appearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notion thereof, than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of the fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale: sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound: sometimes it is wrapped in a dress of humourous expression: sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude: sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection: sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense: sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture passeth for it: sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being: sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange, sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose. Often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable, and inexplicable; being answerable

1781. Ætat. 72. Dilly, "Pray, Sir, be ſo good as to ſend a ſet of my Lives to Mr. Wilkes, with my compliments. This was accordingly done; and Mr. Wilkes paid Dr. Johnſon a viſit, was courteouſly received, and ſate with him a long time.

The company gradually dropped away. Mr. Dilly himſelf was called down ſtairs upon buſineſs; I left the room for ſome time; when I returned I was ſtruck with obſerving Dr. Samuel Johnſon and John Wilkes, Eſq. literally *tête à tête*; for they were reclined upon their chairs, with their heads leaning almoſt cloſe to each other, and talking earneſtly, in a kind of confidential whiſper, of the perſonal quarrel between George the Second and the King of Pruſſia. Such a ſcene of perfectly eaſy ſociality between

able to the numberleſs rovings of fancy, and windings of language. It is, in ſhort, a manner of ſpeaking out of the ſimple and plain way, (ſuch as reaſon teacheth and proveth things by,) which by a pretty ſurprizing uncouthneſs in conceit or expreſſion, doth affect and amuſe the fancy, ſtirring in it ſome wonder, and breeding ſome delight thereto. It raiſeth admiration, as ſignifying a nimble ſagacity of apprehenſion, a ſpecial felicity of invention, a vivacity of ſpirit, and reach of wit more than vulgar; it ſeeming to argue a rare quickneſs of parts, that one can fetch in remote conceits applicable; a notable ſkill, that he can dextrouſly accommodate them to the purpoſe before him; together with a lively briſkneſs of humour, not apt to damp thoſe ſportful flaſhes of imagination. (Whence in Ariſtotle ſuch perſons are termed dexterous men, and men of facile or verſatile manners, who can eaſily turn themſelves to all things, or turn all things to themſelves.)

It alſo procureth delight, by gratifying curioſity with its rareneſs, as ſemblance of difficulty: (as monſters, not for their beauty, but their rarity; as juggling tricks, not for their uſe, but their abſtruſeneſs, are beheld with pleaſure:) by diverting the mind from its road of ſerious thoughts; by inſtilling gaiety and airineſs of ſpirit; by provoking to ſuch diſpoſitions of ſpirit in way of emulation or complaiſance; and by ſeaſoning matters, otherwiſe diſtaſteful or inſipid, with an unuſual and thence grateful tang."

two

two ſuch opponents in the war of political controverſy, as that which I now beheld, would have been an excellent ſubject for a picture. It preſented to my mind the happy days which are foretold in ſcripture, when the lion ſhall lye down with the kid*. 1781. Ætat. 72.

After this day, there was another pretty long interval, during which Dr. Johnſon and I did not meet. When I mentioned it to him with regret, he was pleaſed to ſay, "Then, Sir, let us live double."

About this time it was much the faſhion for ſeveral ladies to have evening aſſemblies, where the fair ſex might participate in converſation with literary and ingenious men, animated by a deſire to pleaſe. Theſe ſocieties were denominated *Blue-ſtocking Clubs*, the origin of which title being little known, it may be worth while to relate it. One of the moſt eminent members of thoſe ſocieties, when they firſt commenced, was Mr. Stillingfleet, whoſe dreſs was remarkably grave, and in particular it was obſerved, that he wore blue-ſtockings. Such was the excellence of his converſation, that his abſence was felt as ſo great a loſs, that it uſed to be ſaid, "We can do nothing without the *blue-ſtockings*;" and thus by degrees the title was eſtabliſhed. Miſs Hannah More has admirably deſcribed a *Blue-ſtocking Club*, in her "*Bas Bleu*," a poem in which many of the perſons who were moſt conſpicuous there are mentioned.

* When I mentioned this to the biſhop of Killaloe, "With the *goat*," ſaid his Lordſhip. Such, however, is the engaging politeneſs and pleaſantry of Mr. Wilkes, and ſuch the ſocial good humour of the Biſhop, that when they dined together at Mr. Dilly's, where I alſo was, they were mutually agreeable.

1781. Ætat. 72. Johnſon was prevailed with to come ſometimes into theſe circles, and did not think himſelf too grave even for the lively Miſs Monckton (now Counteſs of Corke) who uſed to have the fineſt *bit of blue* at the houſe of her mother, Lady Galway. Her vivacity enchanted the ſage, and they uſed to talk together with all imaginable eaſe. A ſingular inſtance happened one evening, when ſhe inſiſted that ſome of Sterne's writings were very pathetick. Johnſon bluntly denied it. "I am ſure, (ſaid ſhe) they have affected *me*."—"Why, (ſaid Johnſon, ſmiling, and rolling himſelf about) that is, becauſe, deareſt, you're a dunce." When ſhe ſome time afterwards mentioned this to him, he ſaid with equal truth and politeneſs, "Madam, if I had thought ſo, I certainly ſhould not have ſaid it."

Another evening Johnſon's kind indulgence towards me had a pretty difficult trial. I had dined at the Duke of Montroſe's, with a very agreeable party, and his Grace, according to his uſual cuſtom, had circulated the bottle very freely. Lord Graham and I went together to Miſs Monckton's, where I certainly was in extraordinary ſpirits, and above all fear or awe. In the midſt of a great number of perſons of the firſt rank, amongſt whom I recollect with confuſion, a noble lady of the moſt ſtately decorum; I placed myſelf next to Johnſon, and thinking myſelf now fully his match, talked to him in a loud and boiſterous manner, deſirous to let the company know how I could contend with *Ajax*. I particularly remember preſſing him upon the value of the pleaſures of the imagination, and as an illuſtration of my argument, aſking him, "What, Sir, ſuppoſing I were to fancy that the (naming the moſt charming Ducheſs

Ducheſs in his Majeſty's dominions) were in love with me, ſhould I not be very happy?" My friend with much addreſs evaded my interrogatories, and kept me as quiet as poſſible; but it may eaſily be conceived how he muſt have felt*. When a few days afterwards I waited upon him and made an apology, he behaved with the moſt friendly gentleneſs. 1781. Ætat. 72.

* Next day I endeavoured to give what had happened the moſt ingenious turn I could, by the following verſes;

To the Honourable Miſs MONCKTON.

NOT that with th' excellent Montroſe
I had the happineſs to dine;
Not that I late from table roſe,
From Graham's wit, from generous wine.

It was not theſe alone which led
On ſacred manners to encroach;
And made me feel what moſt I dread,
JOHNSON's juſt frown, and ſelf-reproach.

But when I enter'd, not abaſh'd,
From your bright eyes were ſhot ſuch rays,
At once intoxication flaſh'd,
And all my frame was in a blaze!

But not a brilliant blaze I own,
Of the dull ſmoak I'm yet aſham'd;
I was a dreary ruin grown,
And not enlighten'd though inflam'd.

Victim at once to wine and love,
I hope, MARIA, you'll forgive;
While I invoke the powers above,
That henceforth I may wiſer live.

The lady was generouſly forgiving, returned me an obliging anſwer, and I thus obtained an *Act of Oblivion*, and took care never to offend again.

1781. Ætat. 72.

While I remained in London this year, Johnſon and I dined together at ſeveral places. I recollect a placid day at Dr. Butters's, who was now removed from Derby to Lower Groſvenor-ſtreet, London; but of his converſation on that and other occaſions during this period, I neglected to keep any regular record, and ſhall therefore inſert here ſome miſcellaneous articles which I find in my Johnſonian notes.

His diſorderly habits, when "making proviſion for the day that was paſſing over him," appear from the following anecdote, communicated to me by Mr. John Nichols:—"In the year 1763, a young bookſeller, who was an apprentice to Mr. Whiſton, waited on him with a ſubſcription to his 'Shakſpeare;' and obſerving that the Doctor made no entry in any book of the ſubſcriber's name, ventured diffidently to aſk, whether he would pleaſe to have the gentleman's addreſs, that it might be properly inſerted in the printed liſt of ſubſcribers.—'*I ſhall print no liſt of ſubſcribers*;' ſaid Johnſon, with great abruptneſs: but almoſt immediately recollecting himſelf, added, very complacently, 'Sir, I have two very cogent reaſons for not printing any liſt of ſubſcribers—one, that I have loſt all the names—the other, that I have ſpent all the money."

Johnſon could not brook appearing to be worſted in argument, even when he had taken the wrong ſide, to ſhew the force and dexterity of his talents. When, therefore, he perceived that his opponent gained ground, he had recourſe to ſome ſudden mode of robuſt ſophiſtry. Once when I was preſſing upon him with viſible advantage, he ſtopped me thus:—"My dear Boſwell, let's have no more of this; you'll make nothing of it. I'd rather have you whiſtle a Scotch tune."

Care

Care, however, muſt be taken to diſtinguiſh between Johnſon when "talked for victory," and Johnſon when he had no deſire but to inform and illuſtrate.—"One of Johnſon's principal talents (ſays an eminent friend) was ſhewn in maintaining the wrong ſide of an argument, and in a ſplendid perverſion of the truth.—If you could contrive to have his fair opinion on a ſubject, and without any bias from perſonal prejudice, or from a wiſh to be victorious in argument, it was wiſdom itſelf, not only convincing, but overpowering." 1781. Ætat. 72.

He had, however, all his life habituated himſelf to conſider converſation as a trial of intellectual vigour and ſkill; and to this, I think, we may venture to aſcribe that unexampled richneſs and brilliancy which appeared in his own. As a proof at once of his eagerneſs for colloquial diſtinction, and his high notion of this eminent friend, he once addreſſed him thus: "—, we now have been ſeveral hours together; and you have ſaid but one thing for which I envied you."

He diſliked much all ſpeculative deſponding conſiderations, which tended to diſcourage men from diligence and exertion. He was in this like Dr. Shaw the great traveller, who Mr. Daines Barrington told me, uſed to ſay, "I hate a *cui bono* man." Upon being aſked by a friend what he ſhould think of one who was apt to ſay, *non eſt tanti*;—"That he's a ſtupid fellow, Sir. (anſwered Johnſon) What would theſe *tanti* men be doing the while?" When I, in a low-ſpirited fit, was talking to him with indifference of the purſuits which generally engage us in a courſe of action, and inquiring a *reaſon* for taking ſo much trouble; "Sir, (ſaid he, in an animated tone,) it is driving on the ſyſtem of life."

He

1781. Ætat. 72. He told me, that he was glad that I had, by General Oglethorpe's means, become acquainted with Dr. Shebbeare. Indeed that gentleman, whatever objections were made to him, had knowledge and abilities much above the claſs of ordinary writers, and deſerves to be remembered as a reſpectable name in literature, were it only for his admirable "Letters on the Engliſh Nation," under the name of "Battiſta Angeloni, a Jeſuit."

Johnſon and Shebbeare*, were frequently named together, as having in former reigns had no predilection for the family of Hanover. The authour of the celebrated "Heroick Epiſtle to Sir William Chambers," introduces them in one line, in a liſt of thoſe who "taſted the ſweets of his preſent Majeſty's reign." Such was Johnſon's fair taſte of the merit of that ſatire, that he allowed Dr. Goldſmith, as he told me, to read it to him from beginning to end, and did not refuſe his praiſe to its execution.

Goldſmith could ſometimes take adventurous liberties with him, and eſcape unpuniſhed. Beauclerk told me that when Goldſmith talked of a project for having a third theatre in London, ſolely for the exhibition of new plays, in order to deliver authours from the ſuppoſed tyranny of managers, Johnſon treated it ſlightingly; upon which Goldſmith ſaid, "Aye, aye, this may be nothing to you, who can now ſhelter yourſelf behind the corner of a penſion;" and that Johnſon bore this with good-humour.

Johnſon praiſed the Earl of Carliſle's poems, which his Lordſhip had publiſhed with his name, as not diſdaining to be a candidate for

* I recollect a ludicrous paragraph in the newſpapers, that the King had penſioned a *He*-bear and a *She*-bear.

literary

literary fame. My friend was of opinion, that when a man of rank appeared in that character, he deſerved to have his merit handſomely allowed.† In this I think he was more liberal than Mr. William Whitehead, in his "Elegy to Lord Villiers," in which under the pretext of "ſuperiour toils, demanding all their care," he diſcovers a jealouſy of the great paying their court to the Muſes. 1781. Ætat. 72.

† Men of rank and fortune however ſhould be pretty well aſſured of having a real claim to the approbation of the public as writers, before they venture to ſtand forth. Dryden in his Preface to "All for Love," thus expreſſes himſelf:

"Men of pleaſant converſation (at leaſt eſteemed ſo) and endued with a trifling kind of fancy, perhaps helped out by a ſmattering of Latin, are ambitious to diſtinguiſh themſelves from the herd of gentlemen, by their poetry:

'*Rarus enim fermè ſenſus communis in illâ*
'*Fortunâ.*'——

And is not this a wretched affectation, not to be contented with what fortune has done for them, and ſit down quietly with their eſtates, but they muſt call their wits in queſtion, and needleſsly expoſe their nakedneſs to public view? Not conſidering that they are not to expect the ſame approbation from ſober men, which they have found from their flatterers after the third bottle: If a little glittering in diſcourſe has paſſed them on us for witty men, where was the neceſſity of undeceiving the world? Would a man who has an ill title to an eſtate, but yet is in poſſeſſion of it, would he bring it of his own accord to be tried at Weſtminſter? We who write, if we want the talents, yet have the excuſe that we do it for a poor ſubſiſtence; but what can be urged in their defence, who not having the vocation of poverty to ſcribble, out of mere wantonneſs take pains to make themſelves ridiculous? Horace was certainly in the right where he ſaid, 'That no man is ſatisfied with his own condition.' A Poet is not pleaſed, becauſe he is not rich: and the rich are diſcontented becauſe the poets will not admit them of their number.

"—— To

1781, Ætat. 72.

" ——————— To the choſen few,
" Who dare excel, thy foſt'ring aid afford,
" Their arts, their magick powers, with honours due
" Exalt;—but be thyſelf what they record."

Johnſon had called twice on the Biſhop of Killaloe before his Lordſhip ſet out for Ireland, having miſſed him the firſt time. He ſaid, " It would have hung heavy on my heart if I had not ſeen him. No man ever paid more attention to another than he has done to me*; and I have neglected him, not wilfully, but from being otherwiſe occupied. Always, Sir, ſet a high value on ſpontaneous kindneſs. He, whoſe inclination prompts him to cultivate your friendſhip of his own accord, will love you more than one whom you have been at pains to attach to you."

* This gave me a very great pleaſure, for there had been once a pretty ſmart altercation between Dr. Barnard and him, upon a queſtion, whether a man could improve himſelf after the age of forty-five; when Johnſon in a haſty humour, expreſſed himſelf in a manner not quite civil. Dr. Barnard made it the ſubject of a copy of pleaſant verſes, in which he ſuppoſed himſelf to learn different perfections from different men. They concluded with delicate irony:

" Johnſon ſhall teach me how to place,
" In faireſt light each borrow'd grace;
" From him I'll learn to write:
" Copy his clear familiar ſtyle,
" And by the roughneſs of his file,
" Grow—like *himſelf*—*polite*."

I know not if Johnſon ever ſaw the Poem, but I had occaſion to find that as Dr. Barnard and he knew each other better, their mutual regard increaſed.

Johnſon

Johnſon told me, that he was once much pleaſed to find that a carpenter, who lived near him, was very ready to ſhew him ſome things in his buſineſs which he wiſhed to ſee. "It was paying (ſaid he) reſpect to literature." 1781. Ætat. 72.

I aſked him if he was not diſſatisfied with having ſo ſmall a ſhare of wealth, and none of thoſe diſtinctions in the ſtate which are the objects of ambition. He had only a penſion of three hundred a year. Why was he not in ſuch circumſtances as to keep his coach? Why had he not ſome conſiderable office? JOHNSON "Sir, I have never complained of the world; nor do I think that I have reaſon to complain. It is rather to be wondered at that I have ſo much. My penſion is more out of the uſual courſe of things than any inſtance that I have known. Here, Sir, was a man avowedly no friend to the Government at the time, gets a penſion without aſking for it. I never courted the great; they ſent for me: but I think they now give me up. They are ſatisfied. They have ſeen enough of me." Upon my obſerving that I could not believe this, for they muſt certainly be highly pleaſed by his converſation; conſcious of his own ſuperiority, he anſwered, "No, Sir; great lords and ladies don't like to have their mouths ſtopped." This was very expreſſive of the effect which the force of his underſtanding and brilliancy of his fancy could not but produce; and, to be ſure, they muſt have found themſelves ſtrangely diminiſhed in his company. When I warmly declared how happy I was at all times to hear him;—"Yes, Sir, (ſaid he). But if you were Lord Chancellor, it would not be ſo: you would then conſider your own dignity."

There was much truth and knowledge of human nature in this remark. But certainly, one ſhould

1781. Ætat. 72. ſhould think, that in whatever elevated ſtate of life a man who *knew* the value of the converſation of Johnſon might be placed, though he might prudently avoid a ſituation in which he might appear leſſoned by compariſon; yet he would frequently gratify himſelf in private with the participation of the rich intellectual entertainment which Johnſon could furniſh. Strange, however, it is, to conſider how few of the great ſought his ſociety; ſo that if one were diſpoſed to take occaſion for ſatire on that account, very conſpicuous objects preſent themſelves. His noble friend, Lord Ellibank, well obſerved, that if a great man procured an interview with Johnſon, and did not wiſh to ſee him more, it ſhewed a mere idle curioſity, and a wretched want of reliſh for extraordinary powers of mind. Mrs. Thrale juſtly and wittily accounted for ſuch conduct by ſaying, that Johnſon's converſation was by much too ſtrong for a perſon accuſtomed to obſequiouſneſs and flattery; it was *muſtard in a young child's mouth!*

One day, when I told him that I was a zealous Tory, but not enough "according to knowledge," and ſhould be obliged to him for "a reaſon," he was ſo candid, and expreſſed himſelf ſo well, that I begged of him to repeat what he had ſaid, and I wrote down as follows:

Of Tory *and* Whig.

"A wiſe Tory and a wiſe Whig, I believe, will agree. Their principles are the ſame, though their modes of thinking are different. A high Tory makes Government unintelligible: it is loſt in the clouds. A violent Whig makes it impracticable: he is for allowing ſo much liberty to every man, that there is not power enough to govern

govern any man. The prejudice of the Tory is for eſtabliſhment: the prejudice of the Whig is for innovation. A Tory does not wiſh to give more real power to Government; but that Government ſhould have more reverence. Then they differ as to the Church. The Tory is not for giving more legal power to the Clergy, but wiſhes they ſhould have a conſiderable influence, founded on the opinion of mankind: the Whig is for limiting and watching them with a narrow jealouſy." 1781. Ætat. 72.

On Saturday, June 2, I ſet out for Scotland, and had engaged, as I ſometimes did, to pay a viſit, in my way, at Southill, in Bedfordſhire, at the hoſpitable manſion of 'ſquire Dilly, the elder brother of my worthy friends the bookſellers in the Poultry. Dr. Johnſon agreed to be of the party this year, with Mr. Charles Dilly and me, and to go and ſee Lord Bute's ſeat at Luton Hoe. He talked little to us in the carriage, being chiefly occupied in reading Dr. Watſon's ſecond volume of "Chemical Eſſays," which he liked very well, and his own "Prince of Abyſſinia," on which he ſeemed to be intenſely fixed; having told us, that he had not looked at it ſince it was firſt publiſhed. I happened to take it out of my pocket to-day, and he ſeized upon it with avidity. He pointed out to me the following remarkable paſſage:—"By what means (ſaid the prince) are the Europeans thus powerful; or why, ſince they can ſo eaſily viſit Aſia and Africa for trade or conqueſt, cannot the Aſiaticks and Africans invade their coaſts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The ſame wind that carries them back would bring us hither."—"They are more powerful, Sir, than we, (anſwered Imlac,) becauſe they are wiſer. Knowledge will always predominate

1781. dominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is Ætat. 72. more than ours, I know not what reaſon can be given, but the unſearchable will of the Supreme Being." He ſaid, "This, Sir, no man can explain otherwiſe."

We ſtopped at Welwyn, where I wiſhed much to ſee, in company with Dr. Johnſon, the reſidence of the authour of "Night Thoughts," which was then poſſeſſed by his ſon, Mr. Young. Here ſome addreſs was requiſite, for I was not acquainted with Mr. Young, and had I propoſed to Dr. Johnſon that we ſhould ſend to him, he would have checked my wiſh, and perhaps been offended. I therefore concerted with Mr. Dilly, that I ſhould ſteal away from Dr. Johnſon and him, and try what reception I could procure from Mr. Young; if unfavourable, nothing was to be ſaid; but if agreeable I ſhould return and notify it to them. I haſtened to Mr. Young's, found he was at home, ſent in word that a gentleman deſired to wait upon him, and was ſhewn into a parlour, where he and a young lady, his daughter were ſitting. He appeared to be a plain, civil, country gentleman; and when I begged pardon for preſuming to trouble him, but ſaid I wiſhed much to ſee his place, if he would give me leave; he behaved very courteouſly, and anſwered, "By all means, Sir; we are juſt going to drink tea; will you ſit down?" I thanked him, but ſaid, that Dr. Johnſon had come with me from London, and I muſt return to the inn, and drink tea with him; that my name was Boſwell, I had travelled with him in the Hebrides. "Sir, (ſaid he) I ſhould think it a great honour to ſee Dr. Johnſon here. Will you allow me to go ſend for him?" Availing myſelf of this opening, I ſaid that "I would go

go myſelf and bring him, when he had drunk tea; he knew nothing of my calling here." Having been thus ſucceſsful, I haſtened back to the inn, and informed Dr. Johnſon that "Mr. Young, ſon of Dr. Young, the authour of 'Night Thoughts,' whom I had juſt left, deſired to have the honour of ſeeing him at the houſe where his father lived." Dr. Johnſon luckily made no inquiry how this invitation had ariſen, but agreed to go, and when we entered Mr. Young's parlour, he addreſſed him with a very polite bow, "Sir, I had a curioſity to come and ſee this place. I had the honour to know that great man, your father." We went into the garden, where we found a gravel-walk, on each ſide of which was a row of trees, planted by Dr. Young, which formed a handſome Gothick arch; Dr. Johnſon called it a fine grove. I beheld it with reverence. 1781. Ætat. 72.

We ſat ſome time in the ſummer-houſe, on the outſide wall of which was inſcribed, "*Ambulantes in horto audiebant vocem Dei.*" And in reference to a brook by which it is ſituated, "*Vivendi rectè qui prorogat horam*, &c." I ſaid to Mr. Young, that I had been told his father was cheerful. "Sir, (ſaid he) he was too well-bred a man not to be cheerful in company; but he was gloomy when alone. He never was cheerful after my mother's death, and he had met with many diſappointments." Dr. Johnſon obſerved to me afterwards, "That this was no favourable account of Dr. Young; for it is not becoming in a man to have ſo little acquieſcence in the ways of Providence, as to be gloomy becauſe he has not obtained as much preferment as he expected; nor to continue gloomy for the loſs of his wife. Grief has its time." The laſt part of this cenſure was theoretically made. Practically,

1781. Ætat. 72. Practically, we know that grief for the loſs of a wife may be continued very long, in proportion as affection has been ſincere. No man knew this better than Dr. Johnſon.

We went into the church, and looked at the monument erected by Mr. Young, to his father. Mr. Young mentioned an anecdote, that his father had received ſeveral thouſand pounds of ſubſcription-money for his "Univerſal Paſſion," but had loſt it in the South-ſea. Dr. Johnſon thought this muſt be a miſtake; for he had never ſeen a ſubſcription-book.

Upon the road we talked of the uncertainty of profit with which authours and bookſellers engage in the publication of literary works. JOHNSON. "My judgement I have found is no certain rule as to the ſale of a book." BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, have you been much plagued with authours ſending you their works to reviſe?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir; I have been thought a ſour, ſurly fellow." BOSWELL. "Very lucky, for you, Sir—in that reſpect." I muſt however obſerve, that notwithſtanding what he now ſaid, which he no doubt imagined at the time to be the fact, there was, perhaps, no man who more frequently yielded to the ſolicitations even of very obſcure authours, to read their manuſcripts, or more liberally aſſiſted them with advice and correction.

He found himſelf very happy at Mr. Dilly's, where there is always abundance of excellent fare and hearty welcome.

On Sunday, June 3, we all went to Southill church, which is very near to Mr. Dilly's houſe. It being the firſt Sunday of the month, the holy ſacrament was adminiſtered, and I ſtaid to partake of it. When I came afterwards into Dr. Johnſon's room, he ſaid, "You did right to

ſtay

ſtay and receive the communion; I had not thought of it." This ſeemed to imply that he did not chooſe to approach the altar without a previous preparation, as to which good men entertain different opinions, ſome holding that it is irreverent to partake of that ordinance without conſiderable premeditation; others, that whoever is a ſincere Chriſtian, and in a proper frame to diſcharge any other ritual duty of our religion, may, without ſcruple, diſcharge this moſt ſolemn one. A middle notion I believe to be the juſt one, which is, that communicants need not think a long train of preparatory forms indiſpenſibly neceſſary; but neither ſhould they raſhly and lightly venture upon ſo aweful and myſterious an inſtitution. Chriſtians muſt judge each for himſelf, what degree of retirement and ſelf-examination is neceſſary upon each occaſion. 1781. Ætat. 72.

Being in a frame, which, I hope for the felicity of human nature, many experience—in fine weather—at the country houſe of a friend—conſoled and elevated by pious exerciſes—I expreſſed myſelf with an unreſtrained fervour to my "Guide, Philoſopher, and Friend;" "My dear Sir, I would fain be a good man; and I am very good now. I fear GOD, and honour the King, I wiſh to do no ill, and to be benevolent to all mankind." He looked at me with a benignant indulgence; but took occaſion to give me able and ſalutary caution. "Do not, Sir, accuſtom yourſelf to truſt to *impreſſions*. There is a middle ſtate of mind between conviction and hypocriſy, of which many are conſcious. By truſting to impreſſions, a man may gradually come to yield to them, and at length be ſubject to them, ſo as not to be a free agent, or what is the ſame thing in effect, to *ſuppoſe* that he

1781. Ætat. 72. he is not a free agent. A man who is in that ſtate, ſhould not be ſuffered to live; if he declares he cannot help acting in a particular way, but is irreſiſtibly impelled, there can be no confidence in him no more than in a tyger. But, Sir, no man believes himſelf to be impelled irreſiſtibly; we know that he who ſays he believes it lies. Favourable impreſſions at particular moments, as to the ſtate of our ſouls, may be deceitful and dangerous. In general no man can be ſure of his acceptance with GOD; ſome, indeed, may have had it revealed to them. St. Paul, who wrought miracles, may have had a miracle wrought on himſelf, and may have had obtained ſupernatural aſſurance of pardon, and mercy, and beatitude; yet St. Paul, though he expreſſes ſtrong hope, alſo expreſſes fear, leſt having preached to others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt-away."

The opinion of a learned Biſhop of our acquaintance, as to there being merit in religious faith being mentioned. JOHNSON. "Why, yes, Sir, the moſt licentious man, were hell open before him, would not take the moſt beautiful ſtrumpet to his arms. We muſt, as the apoſtle ſays, live by faith, not by ſight."

I talked to him of original ſin*, in conſequence of the fall of man, and of the atonement made

* Dr. Ogden, in his ſecond ſermon, "On the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith," with admirable acuteneſs thus addreſſes the oppoſers of that doctrine, which accounts for the confuſion, ſin, and miſery, which we find in this life: "It would be ſevere in GOD, you think, to *degrade* us to ſuch a ſad ſtate, as this, for the offence of our firſt parents; but you can allow him to *place* us in it, without any inducement. Are our calamities leſſened for not being aſcribed to Adam? If your condition be unhapyy, is it not ſtill unhappy, whatever was the occaſion? With the agravation of this reflection, that if it was as good as it was firſt deſigned, there ſeems to be ſomewhat the leſs reaſon to look for its amendment."

by

by our SAVIOUR. After ſome converſation, which he deſired me to remember, he at my requeſt dictated to me as follows: 1781. Ætat. 72.

"WITH reſpect to original ſin, the inquiry is not neceſſary; for whatever is the cauſe of human corruption, men are evidently and confeſſedly ſo corrupt, that all the laws of heaven and earth are inſufficient to reſtrain them from crimes.

"Whatever difficulty there may be in the conception of vicarious puniſhments, it is an opinion which has had poſſeſſion of mankind in all ages. There is no nation that has not uſed the practice of ſacrifices. Whoever, therefore, denies the propriety of vicarious puniſhments, holds an opinion which the ſentiments and practice of mankind have contradicted, from the beginning of the world. The great ſacrifice for the ſins of mankind was offered at the death of the MESSIAH, who is called in ſcripture, 'The Lamb of GOD, that taketh away the ſins of the world.' To judge of the reaſonableneſs of the ſcheme of redemption, it muſt be conſidered as neceſſary to the government of the univerſe, that GOD ſhould make known his perpetual and irreconcileable deteſtation of moral evil. He might indeed puniſh, and puniſh only the offenders: but as the end of puniſhment is not revenge of crimes, but propagation of virtue, it was more becoming the divine clemency to find another manner of proceeding, leſs deſtructive to man, and at leaſt equally powerful to promote goodneſs. The end of puniſhment is to reclaim and warn. *That* puniſhment will both reclaim and warn, which ſhews evidently ſuch abhorrence of ſin in GOD, as may deter us from it, or ſtrike

1781. Ætat. 72. us with dread of vengeance when we have committed it. This is effected by vicarious punishment. Nothing could more testify the opposition between the nature of GOD and moral evil, or more amply display his justice, to men and angels, to all orders and successions of beings, than that it was necessary for the highest and purest nature, even for DIVINITY itself, to pacify the demands of vengeance, by a painful death; of which the natural effect will be, that when justice is appeased, there is a proper place for the exercise of mercy; and that such propitiation shall supply, in some degree, the imperfections of our obedience, and the inefficacy of our repentance. For, obedience and repentance, such as we can perform, are still necessary. Our SAVIOUR has told us, that he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil: to fulfil the typical law, by the performance of what those types had foreshewn; and the moral law by precepts of greater purity and higher exaltation."

[Here he said, "GOD bless you with it." I acknowledged myself much obliged to him; but I begged that he would go on as to the propitiation being the chief object of our most holy faith. He then dictated this one paragraph.]

"The peculiar doctrine of Christianity is, that of an universal sacrifice, and perpetual propitiation. Other prophets only proclaimed the will and the threatenings of GOD. CHRIST satisfied his justice."

The Reverend Mr. Palmer, Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, dined with us. He expressed a wish that a better provision were made for parish clerks. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; a parish clerk should be a man who is able to make a will, or write a letter for any body in the parish."

I mentioned

I mentioned Lord Monboddo's notion that the ancient Egyptians, with all their learning, and all their arts, were not only black, but wooly-haired. Mr. Palmer aſked how did it appear upon examining the mummies? Dr. Johnſon approved of this teſt. 1781. Ætat. 72.

Although upon moſt occaſions I never heard a more ſtrenuous advocate for the advantages of wealth, than Dr. Johnſon; he this day, I know not from what caprice, took the other ſide. "I have not obſerved (ſaid he) that men of very large fortunes enjoy any thing extraordinary that makes happineſs. What has the Duke of Bedford? What has the Duke of Devonſhire? The only great inſtance that I have ever known of the enjoyment of wealth was, that of Jamaica Dawkins, who going to viſit Palmyra, and hearing that the way was infeſted by robbers, hired a troop of Turkiſh horſe to guard him."

Dr. Gibbons, the Diſſenting miniſter, being mentioned, he ſaid, "I took to Dr. Gibbons." And addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Charles Dilly, added, "I ſhall be glad to ſee him. Tell him, if he'll call on me, and dawdle over a diſh of tea in the afternoon, I ſhall take it kind."

The Reverend Mr. Smith, Vicar of Southill, a very reſpectable man, with a very agreeable family, ſent an invitation to us to drink tea. I remarked Dr. Johnſon's very formal politeneſs. Though always fond of changing the ſcene, he ſaid, "We muſt have Mr. Dilly's leave. We cannot go from your houſe, Sir, without your permiſſion." We all went, and were well ſatisfied with our viſit. I however remember nothing particular, except a nice diſtinction which Dr. Johnſon made with reſpect to the power of memory, maintaining that forgetfulneſs was a man's own fault. "To remember

1781. Ætat. 72. and to recollect (ſaid he) are different things.—A man has not the power to recollect what is not in his mind; but when a thing is in his mind he may remember it." The remark was occaſioned by my leaning back on a chair, which a little before I had perceived to be broken, and pleading forgetfulneſs as an excuſe. "Sir, (ſaid he,) its being broken was certainly in your mind."

When I obſerved that a houſebreaker was in general very timorous. JOHNSON. "No wonder, Sir; he is afraid of being ſhot getting *into* a houſe, or hanged when he has got *out* of it."

He told us, that he had in one day written ſix ſheets of a tranſlation from the French; adding, 'I ſhould be glad to ſee it now. I wiſh that I had copies of all the pamphlets written againſt me, as it is ſaid Pope had. Had I known that I ſhould make ſo much noiſe in the world, I ſhould have been at pains to collect them. I believe there is hardly a day in which there is not ſomething about me in the news-papers."

On Monday, June 4, we all went to Luton-Hoe, to ſee Lord Bute's magnificent ſeat, for which I had obtained a ticket. As we entered the park, I talked in a high ſtyle of my old friendſhip with Lord Mountſtuart, and ſaid, "I ſhall probably be much at this place." The Sage, aware of human viciſſitudes, gently checked me: "Don't you be too ſure of that." He made two or three peculiar obſervations; as when ſhewn the botanical garden, "Is not *every* garden a botanical garden?" When told that there was a ſhrubbery to the extent of ſeveral miles; "That is making a very fooliſh uſe of the ground; a little of it is very well." When it was propoſed that we ſhould walk on the pleaſure ground; "Don't let us fatigue ourſelves. Why ſhould we walk there? Here's a fine

a fine tree, let's go to the top of it." But upon the whole, he was very much pleaſed. He ſaid, "This is one of the places I do not regret having come to ſee." It is a very ſtately palace, indeed; in the houſe magnificence is not ſacrificed to convenience, nor convenience to magnificence. The library is very ſplendid; the dignity of the rooms is very great; and the quantity of pictures is beyond expectation, beyond hope. 1781. Ætat. 72.

It happened without any previous concert, that we viſited the ſeat of Lord Bute upon the King's birth-day; we dined and drank his Majeſty's health at an inn, in the village of Luton.

In the evening I put him in mind of his promiſe to favour me with the copy of his celebrated Letter to the Earl of Cheſterfield, and he was at laſt pleaſed to comply with this earneſt requeſt, by dictating it to me from his memory; for he believed that he himſelf had no copy.—There was an animated glow in his countenance while he thus recalled his high-minded indignation.

He laughed heartily at a ludicrous action in the Court of Seſſion, in which I was counſel.—The Society of *Procurators*, or Attornies, entitled to practiſe in the inferiour Courts at Edinburgh, had obtained a royal charter, in which they had taken care to have their ancient deſignation of *Procurators* changed into that of *Solicitors*, from a notion, as they ſuppoſed, that it was more *genteel*; and this new title they diſplayed by a publick advertiſement for a *General Meeting* at their HALL.

It has been ſaid, that the Scottiſh nation is not diſtinguiſhed for humour; and, indeed, what happened on this occaſion may in ſome degree juſtify the remark: for although this ſociety had contrived

1781. Ætat. 72. contrived to make themſelves a very prominent object for the ridicule of ſuch as might ſtoop to it, the only joke that appeared was the following paragraph, ſent as a card to the news-paper called "*The Caledonian Mercury:*"

"A correſpondent informs us, that the Worſhipful Society of *Chaldeans*, *Cadies*, or *Running Stationers* of this city, are reſolved, in imitation, and encouraged by the ſingular ſucceſs of their brethren, of an *equally reſpectable* Society, to apply for a charter of their privileges, particularly of the ſole privileges of PROCURING, in the moſt extenſive ſenſe of the word, excluſive of chairmen, porters, penny-poſt men, and other *inferiour* ranks; their brethren the R—Y—L S—LL—RS, *alias* P—C—RS, *before the* INFERIOUR Courts of this City, always excepted.

"Should the Worſhipful Society be ſucceſsful, they are farther reſolved not to be *puffed up* thereby, but to demean themſelves with more equanimity and decency than their *R--y--l, learned*, and *very modeſt* brethren above mentioned have done, upon their late dignification and exaltation."

A majority of the members of the ſociety proſecuted Mr. Robertſon, the publiſher of the paper, for damages; and the firſt judgement of the whole Court very wiſely diſmiſſed the action, *Solventur riſu tabulæ, tu miſſus abibis.* But a new trial or review was granted upon a petition, according to the forms in Scotland. This petition I was engaged to anſwer, and Dr. Johnſon with great alacrity furniſhed to-night what follows;

"All injury is either of the perſon, the fortune, or the fame. Now, it is a certain thing, it is proverbially known, that *a jeſt breaks no bones.*

bones. They never have gained half-a-crown less in the whole profession since this mischievous paragraph has appeared: and, as to their reputation, What is their reputation but an instrument of getting money? If, therefore, they have lost no money, the question upon reputation may be answered by a very old position,—*De minimis non curat Prætor.* 1781. Ætat. 72.

"Whether there was, or was not, an *animus injuriandi*, is not worth inquiring, if no *injuria* can be proved. But the truth is, there was no *animus injuriandi*. It was only an *animus irritandi**, which, happening to be exercised upon a *genus irritable*, produced unexpected violence of resentment. Their irritability arose only from an opinion of their own importance, and their delight in their new exaltation. What might have been borne by a *Procurator* could not be borne by a *Solicitor*. Your Lordships well know, that *honores mutant mores*. Titles and dignities play strongly upon the fancy. As a madman is apt to think himself grown suddenly great; so he that grows suddenly great is apt to borrow a little from the madman. To co-operate with their resentment would be to promote their phrenzy; nor is it possible to guess to what they might proceed, if to the new title of Solicitor, should be added the elation of victory and triumph.

"We consider your Lordships as the protectors of our rights, and the guardians of our virtues; but believe it not included in your high office, that you should flatter our vices, or solace our vanity: and, as vanity only dictates

* Mr. Robertson altered this word to *jocandi*, he having found in Blackstone that to *irritate* is actionable.

this

1781. Ætat. 72. this proſecution, it is humbly hoped your Lordſhips will diſmiſs it.

"If every attempt, however light or ludicrous, to leſſen another's reputation, is to be puniſhed by a judicial ſentence, what puniſhment can be ſufficiently ſevere for him who attempts to diminiſh the reputation of the Supreme Court of Juſtice, by reclaiming upon a clauſe already determined, without any change in the ſtate of the queſtion? Does it not imply hopes that the Judges will change their opinion? Is not uncertainty and inconſtancy in the higheſt degree diſreputable to a Court? Does it not ſuppoſe, that the former judgement was temerarious or negligent? Does it not leſſen the confidence of the publick? Will it not be ſaid, that *jus eſt aut incognitum, aut vagum?* and will not the conſequence be drawn, *miſera eſt ſervitus?* Will not the rules of action be obſcure? Will not he who knows himſelf wrong to-day, hope that the courts of juſtice will think him right to-morrow? Surely, my Lords, theſe are attempts of dangerous tendency, which the Solicitors, as men verſed in the law, ſhould have foreſeen and avoided. It was natural for an ignorant printer to appeal from the Lord Ordinary; but from lawyers, the deſcendants of lawyers, who have practiſed for three hundred years, and have now raiſed themſelves to a higher denomination, it might be expected, that they ſhould know the reverence due to a judicial determination; and, having been once diſmiſſed, ſhould ſit down in ſilence."

I am aſhamed to mention, that the Court, by a plurality of voices, without having a ſingle additional circumſtance before them, reverſed their own judgement, made a ſerious matter of this dull and fooliſh joke, and adjudged Mr.

Mr. Robertſon to pay to the Society five pounds (ſterling money) and coſts of ſuit. The deciſion will ſeem ſtrange to Engliſh lawyers. 1781. Ætat. 72.

On Tueſday, June 5, Johnſon was to return to London. He was very pleaſant at breakfaſt; I mentioned a friend of mine having reſolved never to marry a pretty woman. JOHNSON.—"Sir, it is a very fooliſh reſolution to reſolve not to marry a pretty woman. Beauty is of itſelf very eſtimable. No, Sir, I would prefer a pretty woman, unleſs there are objections to her. A pretty woman may be fooliſh; a pretty woman may be wicked; a pretty woman may not like me. But there is no ſuch danger in marrying a pretty woman as is apprehended;—ſhe will not be perſecuted if ſhe does not invite perſecution. A pretty woman, if ſhe has a mind to be wicked, can find a readier way than another; and that is all."

I accompanied him in Mr. Dilly's chaiſe to Shefford, where talking of Lord Bute's never going to Scotland, he ſaid, "As an Engliſhman, I ſhould wiſh all the Scotch gentlemen to be educated in England; Scotland would become a province; they would ſpend all their rents in England." This is a ſubject of much conſequence, and much delicacy. The advantage of an Engliſh education is unqueſtionably very great to Scotch gentlemen of talents and ambition; and regular viſits, and I ſhould think other means, might be effectually uſed to prevent them from being totally eſtranged from their native country, any more than a Cumberland or Northumberland gentleman, who has been educated in the South of England. I own, indeed, that it is no ſmall misfortune for Scotch gentlemen, who have neither talents nor ambition, to be educated in England, where they may

1781. Ætat. 72. may be perhaps diſtinguiſhed only by a nickname, laviſh their fortune in giving expenſive entertainments to thoſe who laugh at them, and ſaunter about as mere idle inſignificant hangers on even upon the fooliſh great; when if they had been judiciouſly brought up at home, they might have been comfortable and creditable members of ſociety.

At Shefford, I had another affectionate parting from my reverend friend, who was taken up by the Bedford coach, and carried to the metropolis. I went with Meſſieurs Dilly, to ſee ſome friends at Bedford; dined with the officers of the militia of the county, and next day proceeded on my journey.

To Bennel Langton, *Eſq.*

" Dear Sir,

" HOW welcome your account of yourſelf and your invitation to your new houſe was to me, I need not tell you, who conſider our friendſhip not only as formed by choice, but as matured by time. We have been now long enough acquainted to have many images in common; and, therefore to have a ſource of converſation which neither the learning nor the wit of a new companion can ſupply.

" My Lives are now publiſhed; and if you will tell me whither I ſhall ſend them that they may come to you, I will take care that you ſhall not be without them.

" You will, perhaps, be glad to hear, that Mrs. Thrale is diſincumbered of her brew-houſe; and that it ſeemed to the purchaſer ſo far from an evil, that he was content to give for it an hundred and thirty-five thouſand pounds. Is the nation ruined?

" Pleaſe

" Pleaſe to make my reſpectful compliments to Lady Rothes, and keep me in the memory of all the little dear family, particularly pretty Mrs. Jane. I am, Sir, 1781. Ætat. 72.

" Your affectionate humble ſervant,

" Bolt-court, June 16, 1781. SAM. JOHNSON."

To THOMAS ASTLE, *Eſq.*

" SIR,

" I AM aſhamed that you have been forced to call ſo often for your books, but it has been by no fault on either ſide. They have never been out of my hands, nor have I ever been at home without ſeeing you; for to ſee a man ſo ſkilful in the antiquities of my country, is an opportunity of improvement not willingly to be miſſed.

" Your notes on Alfred* appear to me very judicious and accurate, but there are too few. Many things familiar to you are unknown to me, and to moſt others; and you muſt not think too favourably of your readers; by ſuppoſing them knowing, you will leave them ignorant. Meaſure of land, and value of money, it is of great importance to ſtate with care. Had the Saxons any gold coin?

" I have much curioſity after the manners and tranſactions of the middle ages, but have wanted either diligence or opportunity in both. You, Sir, have great opportunities, and I wiſh you both diligence and ſucceſs.

" I am, Sir, &c.

" July 17, 1781. SAM. JOHNSON."

* The Will of King Alfred, alluded to in this letter, is now printing from the original Saxon, in the library of Mr. Aſtle, at the expence of the Univerſity of Oxford.—It is not to be ſold, but it is to be diſtributed in preſents.

The

1781. Ætat. 72. The following curious anecdote I inſert in Dr. Burney's own words. "Dr. Burney related to Dr. Johnſon the partiality which his writings had excited in a friend of Dr. Burney's, Mr. Bewley, well known in Norfolk by the name of the *Philoſopher of Maſſingham*; who, from the Ramblers and Plan of his Dictionary, and long before the authour's fame was eſtabliſhed by the Dictionary itſelf, or any other work, had conceived ſuch a reverence for him, that he urgently begged Dr. Burney to give him the cover of the firſt letter he had received from him, as a relick of ſo eſtimable a writer. This was in 1755. In 1760, when Dr. Burney viſited Dr. Johnſon at the Temple in London, where he had then Chambers, he happened to arrive there before he was up; and being ſhewn into the room where he was to breakfaſt, finding himſelf alone, he examined the contents of the apartment, to try whether he could undiſcovered ſteal any thing to ſend to his friend Bewley, as another relick of the admirable Dr. Johnſon. But finding nothing better to his purpoſe, he cut ſome briſtles off his hearth-broom, and incloſed them in a letter to his country enthuſiaſt, who received them with due reverence. The Doctor was ſo ſenſible of the honour done him by a man of genius and ſcience, to whom he was an utter ſtranger, that he ſaid to Dr. Burney, 'Sir, there is no man poſſeſſed of the ſmalleſt portion of modeſty, but muſt be flattered with the admiration of ſuch a man. I'll give him a ſet of my Lives, if he will do me the honour to accept of them.' In this he kept his word; and Dr. Burney had not only the pleaſure of gratifying his friend with a preſent more worthy of his acceptance than the ſegment from the hearth-broom, but ſoon after of introducing him to Dr. Johnſon

Johnſon himſelf in Bolt-court, with whom he had the ſatisfaction of converſing a conſiderable time, not a fortnight before his death; which happened in St. Martin's-ſtreet, during his viſit to Dr. Burney, in the houſe where the great Sir Iſaac Newton had lived and died before." 1781. Ætat. 72.

In one of his little memorandum-books is the following minute:

"Auguſt 9, 3 p. m. ætat. 72, in the ſummer-houſe at Streatham.

"After innumerable reſolutions formed and neglected, I have retired hither, to plan a life of greater diligence, in hope that I may yet be uſeful, and be daily better prepared to appear before my Creator and my Judge, from whoſe infinite mercy I humbly call for aſſiſtance and ſupport.

"My purpoſe is,

"To paſs eight hours every day in ſome ſerious employment.

"Having prayed, I purpoſe to employ the next ſix weeks upon the Italian language, for my ſettled ſtudy."

How venerably pious does he appear in theſe moments of ſolitude, and how ſpirited are his reſolutions for the improvement of his mind, even in elegant literature at a very advanced period of life, and when afflicted with many complaints.

In autumn he went to Oxford, Birmingham, Lichfield, and Aſhbourne, for which very good reaſons might be given, in the conjectural yet poſitive manner of writers, who are proud to account for every event which they relate. He himſelf however ſays, "The motives of my journey I hardly know; I omitted it laſt year, and

1781. Ætat. 72. and am not willing to miſs it again*." But ſome good conſiderations ariſe, amongſt which is the kindly recollection of Mr. Hector, ſurgeon, at Birmingham. "Hector is likewiſe an old friend, the only companion of my childhood that paſſed through the ſchool with me. We have always loved one another; perhaps we may be made better by ſome ſerious converſation, of which however I have no diſtinct hope."

He ſays too, "At Lichfield, my native place, I hope to ſhew a good example by frequent attendance on publick worſhip."

My correſpondence with him during the reſt of this year was I know not why very ſcanty, and all on my ſide. I wrote him one letter to introduce Mr. Sinclair (now Sir John) the member for Caithneſs, to his acquaintance; and informed him in another, that my wife had again been affected with alarming ſymptoms of illneſs.

1782. In 1782, his complaints encreaſed, and the hiſtory of his life for this year, is little more than a mournful recital of the variations of his illneſs, in the midſt of which, however, it will appear from his letters, that the powers of his mind were in no degree impaired.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I SIT down to anſwer your letter on the ſame day which I received it, and am pleaſed that my firſt letter of the year is to you. No man ought to be at eaſe while he knows himſelf

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 201.

in

in the wrong; and I have not ſatisfied myſelf with my long ſilence. The letter relating to Mr. Sinclair, however was, I believe, never brought. 1782. Æt. 73.

"My health has been tottering this laſt year; and I can give no very laudable account of my time. I am always hoping to do better than I have ever hitherto done.

"My journey to Aſhbourne and Staffordſhire was not pleaſant; for what enjoyment has a ſick man viſiting the ſick? Shall we ever have another frolick like our journey to the Hebrides?

"I hope that dear Mrs. Boſwell will ſurmount her complaints; in loſing her you would loſe your anchor, and be toſt, without ſtability, by the waves of life*. I wiſh both her and you very many years, and very happy.

"For ſome months paſt I have been ſo withdrawn from the world, that I can ſend you nothing particular. All your friends, however, are well, and will be glad of your return to London. I am, dear Sir,

"Yours moſt affectionately,

"January 5, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

At a time when he was leſs able than he had once been to ſuſtain a ſhock, he was ſuddenly deprived of Mr. Levett, which he thus communicated to Dr. Lawrence:

"SIR,

"OUR old friend, Mr. Levett, who was laſt night eminently cheerful, died this morning. The man who lay in the ſame room, hearing an uncommon noiſe, got up and tried to

* The truth of this has been proved by ſad experience.

make

1782. Ætat. 73. make him ſpeak, but without effect. He then called Mr. Holder, the apothecary, who though when he came he thought him dead, opened a vein, but could draw no blood. So has ended the long life of a very uſeful and very blameleſs man. I am, Sir,

" Your moſt humble ſervant,

" Jan. 17, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

In one of his memorandum-books in my poſſeſſion, is the following entry: " January 20, Sunday. Robert Levett was buried in the church-yard of Bridewell, between one and two in the afternoon. He died on Thurſday 17, about ſeven in the morning, by an inſtantaneous death. He was an old and faithful friend; I have known him from about 46. *Commendari.* May GOD have mercy on him. May he have mercy on me."

Such was Johnſon's affectionate regard for Levett*, that he honoured his memory with the following verſes:

" CONDEMN'D to Hope's deluſive mine,
" As on we toil from day to day,
" By ſudden blaſt or ſlow decline,
" Our ſocial comforts drop away.

" Well try'd through many a varying year,
" See LEVETT to the grave deſcend;
" Officious, innocent, ſincere,
" Of ev'ry friendleſs name the friend.

" Yet ſtill he fills Affection's eye,
" Obſcurely wiſe and coarſely kind;
" Nor, letter'd arrogance†, deny
" The praiſe to merit unrefin'd.

* See an account of him in " Gentleman's Magazine," Feb. 1785.

† In both editions of Sir John Hawkins's Life of Dr. Johnſon, " letter'd *ignorance*," is printed.

" When

1782. Ætat. 73.

" When fainting Nature call'd for aid,
" And hov'ring Death prepared the blow,
" His vigorous remedy diſplay'd
" The pow'r of art without the ſhow.

" In Miſery's darkeſt caverns known,
" His ready help was ever nigh,
" Where hopeleſs Anguiſh pours his groan,
" And lonely Want retir'd to die*.

" No ſummons mock'd by chill delay,
" No petty gains diſdain'd by pride;
" The modeſt wants of ev'ry day,
" The toil of ev'ry day ſupply'd.

" His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
" Nor made a pauſe nor left a void;
" And ſure th' Eternal Maſter found
" His ſingle talent well employ'd.

" The buſy day, the peaceful night,
" Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
" His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
" Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

" Then, with no throbs of fiery pain,
" No cold gradations of decay,
" Death broke at once the vital chain,
" And freed his ſoul the neareſt way."

In one of his regiſters of this year, there occurs the following curious paſſage: " Jan. 20. The miniſtry is diſſolved. I prayed with Fran-

* Johnſon repeated this line to me thus:
" And Labour ſteals an hour to die."
But he afterwards altered it to the preſent reading.

cis,

1782. Ætat. 73. cis, and gave thanks*." It has been the ſubject of diſcuſſion, whether there are two diſtinct particulars mentioned here, or that we are to underſtand the giving of thanks to be in conſequence of the diſſolution of the miniſtry. In ſupport of the laſt of theſe conjectures, may be urged his mean opinion of that miniſtry, which has frequently appeared in the courſe of this work; and it is ſtrongly confirmed by what he ſaid on the ſubject to Mr. Seward:—"I am glad the miniſtry is removed. Such a bunch of imbecility never diſgraced a country. If they ſent a meſſenger into the city to take up a printer, the meſſenger was taken up inſtead of the printer, and committed by the ſitting Alderman.—If they ſent one army to the relief of another, the firſt army was defeated and taken before the ſecond arrived. I will not ſay that what they did was always wrong; but it was always done at a wrong time."

To Mrs. STRAHAN.

"DEAR MADAM,

"MRS. WILLIAMS ſhewed me your kind letter. This little habitation is now but a melancholy place, clouded with the gloom of diſeaſe and death. Of the four inmates, one has been ſuddenly ſnatched away; two are oppreſſed by a very afflictive and dangerous illneſs; and I tried yeſterday to gain ſome relief by a third bleeding, from a diſorder which has for ſome time diſtreſſed me, and I think myſelf to-day much better.

"I am glad, dear Madam, to hear that you are ſo far recovered as to go to Bath. Let me

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 209.

once

once more intreat you to ſtay till your health is not only obtained but confirmed. Your fortune is ſuch as that no moderate expence deſerves your care; and you have a huſband who, I believe, does not regard it. Stay, therefore till you are quite well. I am, for my part, very much deſerted; but complaint is uſeleſs. I hope GOD will bleſs you, and I deſire you to form the ſame wiſh for me. I am, dear Madam, 1782. Ætat. 73.

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"Feb. 4, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

To EDMOND MALONE, *Eſq.*

"Sir,

"I HAVE for many weeks been ſo much out of order, that I have gone out only in a coach to Mrs. Thrale's, where I can uſe all the freedom that ſickneſs requires. Do not, therefore, take it amiſs, that I am not with you and Dr. Farmer. I hope hereafter to ſee you often. I am, Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"Feb. 27, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the ſame.

"DEAR SIR,

"I HOPE I grow better, and ſhall ſoon be able to enjoy the kindneſs of my friends. I think this wild adherence to Chatterton more unaccountable than the obſtinate defence of Oſſian. In Oſſian there is a national pride, which may be forgiven, though it cannot be applauded. In Chatterton there is nothing but the reſolution to ſay again what has once been ſaid. I am, Sir,

"Your humble ſervant,

"March 2, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

1782. Æt. 73. These short letters shew the regard which Dr. Johnson entertained for Mr. Malone, who the more he is known is the more highly valued. It is much to be regretted that Johnson was prevented from sharing the elegant hospitality of that gentleman's table, at which he would in every respect have been fully gratified. Mr. Malone, who has so ably succeeded him as an editor of Shakspeare, has, in his Preface, done great and just honour to Johnson's memory.

To Mrs. LUCY PORTER, *in Lichfield.*

"DEAR MADAM,

"I WENT away from Lichfield ill, and have had a troublesome time with my breath; for some weeks I have been disordered by a cold, of which I could not get the violence abated, till I had been let blood three times. I have not, however, been so bad but that I could have written, and I am sorry that I neglected it.

"My dwelling is but melancholy, both Williams, and Desmoulins, and myself are very sickly; Frank is not well; and poor Levett died in his bed the other day, by a sudden stroke; I supposed not one minute passed between health and death; so uncertain are human things.

"Such is the appearance of the world about me; I hope your scenes are more cheerful. But whatever befals us, though it is wise to be serious, it is useless and foolish, and perhaps sinful to be gloomy. Let us, therefore, keep ourselves as easy as we can; though the loss of friends will be felt, and poor Levett has been a faithful adherent for thirty years.

"Forgive me, my dear love, the omission of writing; I hope to mend that and my other faults. Let me have your prayers.

"Make

"Make my compliments to Mr. Cobb, and Miſs Adey, and Mr. Pearſon, and the whole company of my friends. I am, my dear, 1782. Ætat. 73.

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"London, March 2, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the ſame.

"DEAR MADAM,

"MY laſt was but a dull letter, and I know not that this will be much more cheerful; I am however, willing to write, becauſe you are deſirous to hear from me.

"My diſorder has now began its ninth week, for it is not yet over. I was laſt Thurſday blooded for the fourth time, and have ſince found myſelf much relieved, but I am very tender and eaſily hurt; ſo that ſince we parted I have had little comfort, but I hope that the ſpring will recover me; and that in the ſummer I ſhall ſee Lichfield again, for I will not delay my viſit another year to the end of autumn.

"I have, by advertiſing, found poor Mr. Levett's brothers in Yorkſhire, who will take the little that he has left; it is but little, yet it will be welcome, for I believe they are of very low condition.

"To be ſick, and to ſee nothing but ſickneſs and death, is but a gloomy ſtate, but I hope better times, even in this world will come, and whatever this world may with-hold or give, we ſhall be happy in a better ſtate. Pray for me, my dear Lucy.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Cobb, and Miſs Adey, and my old friend, Hetty Bailey, and

1782. Ætat. 73. and to all the Lichfield ladies. I am, dear madam,

"Yours, affectionately,

"Bolt-Court, Fleet-ſtreet, March 19, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

On the day on which this letter was written, he thus feelingly mentions his reſpected friend and phyſician, Dr. Lawrence:—"Poor Lawrence has almoſt loſt the ſenſe of hearing; and I have loſt the converſation of a learned, intelligent, and communicative companion, and a friend whom long familiarity has much endeared. Lawrence is one of the beſt men whom I have known.—"*Noſtrum omnium miſera Deus**.'

It was Dr. Johnſon's cuſtom when he wrote to Dr. Lawrence concerning his own health, to uſe the Latin language. I have been favoured by Miſs Lawrence with one of theſe letters as a ſpecimen.

T. LAWRENTIO, *Medico S.*

"*NOVUM frigus, nova tuſſis, nova ſpirandi difficultas, novam ſanguinis miſſionem ſuadent, quam tamen te inconſulto nolim fieri. Ad te venire vix poſſum, nec eſt cur ad me venias. Licere vel non licere uno verbo dicendum eſt; cætera mihi et Holdero† reliqueris. Si per te licet, imperatur nuncio Holderum ad me deducere.*

"*Maiis Calendis*, 1782.

"*Poſtquàm tu diſceſſeris quo me vertam‡?*"

To

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 207.

† Mr. Holder, Dr. Johnſon's apothecary.

‡ Soon after the above letter, Dr. Lawrence left London, but not before the palſy had made ſo great a progreſs as to render him unable to write for himſelf.—The following are extracts from letters addreſſed to one of his daughters:

"You

1782.
Ætat. 73.

To Captain LANGTON*, *in* ROCHESTER.

"DEAR SIR,

"IT is now long ſince we ſaw one another, and whatever has been the reaſon neither you have written to me, nor I to you. To let friendſhip die away by negligence and ſilence, is certainly not wiſe. It is voluntarily to throw away one of the greateſt comforts of this weary pilgrimage, of which when it is, as it

"You will eaſily believe with what gladneſs I read that you had heard once again that voice to which we have all ſo often delighted to attend. May you often hear it. If we had his mind and his tongue, we could ſpare the reſt.

"I am not vigorous, but much better than when dear Dr. Lawrence held my pulſe the laſt time. Be ſo kind as to let me know, from one little interval to another, the ſtate of his body. I am pleaſed that he remembers me, and hope that it never can be poſſible for me to forget him, July, 22, 1782."

"I am much delighted even with the ſmall advances which dear Dr. Lawrence makes towards recovery. If we could have again but his mind, and his tongue in his mind, and his right hand, we ſhould not much lament the reſt. I ſhould not deſpair of helping the ſwelled hand by electricity, if it were frequently and diligently ſupplied.

"Let me know from time to time whatever happens; and I hope I need not tell you, how much I am intereſted in every change. Aug. 26, 1782."

"Though the accounts with which you favoured me in your laſt letter could not give me the pleaſure that I wiſhed, yet I was glad to receive it; for my affection to my dear friend makes me deſirous of knowing his ſtate, whatever it be. I beg, therefore, that you continue to let me know, from time to time, all that you obſerve.

"Many fits of ſevere illneſs have, for about three months paſt, forced my kind phyſician often upon my mind. I am now better, and hope gratitude, as well as diſtreſs, can be a motive to remembrance. Bolt-court, Fleet-ſtreet, Feb. 4, 1783."

* Mr. Langton being at this time on duty at Rocheſter, he is addreſſed by his military title.

muſt

1782. Ætat. 73. muſt be, taken finally away, he that travels on alone, will wonder how his eſteem could be ſo little. Do not forget me; you ſee that I do not forget you. It is pleaſing in the ſilence of ſolitude to think, that there is one at leaſt, however diſtant, of whoſe benevolence there is little doubt, and whom there is yet hope of ſeeing again.

"Of my life, from the time we parted, the hiſtory is mournful. The ſpring of laſt year deprived me of Thrale, a man whoſe eye for fifteen years had ſcarcely been turned upon me but with reſpect or tenderneſs; for ſuch another friend, the general courſe of human things will not ſuffer man to hope. I paſſed the ſummer at Streatham, but there was no Thrale; and having idled away the ſummer with a weakly body and neglected mind, I made a journey to Staffordſhire on the edge of winter. The ſeaſon was dreary, I was ſickly, and found the friends ſickly, whom I went to ſee. After a ſorrowful ſojourn I returned to a habitation poſſeſſed for the preſent by two ſick women, where my dear old friend, Mr. Levett, to whom, as he uſed to tell me, I owe your acquaintance, died a few weeks ago, ſuddenly in his bed; there paſſed not, I believe, a minute between health and death. At night, as at Mrs. Thrale's, I was muſing in my chamber, I thought with uncommon earneſtneſs, that however I might alter my mode of life, or whitherſoever I might remove, I would endeavour to retain Levett about me; in the morning my ſervant brought me word that Levett was called to another ſtate, a ſtate for which, I think, he was not unprepared, for he was very uſeful to the poor. How much ſoever I valued him, I now wiſh that I had valued him more.

"I have

1782. Ætat. 73.

"I have myſelf been ill more than eight weeks of a diſorder, from which at the expence of about fifty ounces of blood, I hope I am now recovering.

"You, dear Sir, have, I hope, a more cheerful ſcene; you ſee George fond of his book, and the pretty miſſes airy and lively, with my own little Jenny equal to the beſt; and in whatever can contribute to your quiet or pleaſure, you have Lady Rothes ready to concur. May whatever you enjoy of good be encreaſed, and whatever you ſuffer of evil be diminiſhed.

"I am, dear Sir, your humble ſervant,

"Bolt-Court, Fleet-ſtreet, March 20, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mr. HECTOR, *in Birmingham*.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I HOPE I do not very groſsly flatter myſelf to imagine that you and dear Mrs. Careleſs will be glad to hear ſome account of me. I performed the journey to London with very little inconvenience, and came ſafe to my habitation, where I found nothing but ill-health, and, of conſequence, very little cheerfulneſs. I then went to viſit a little way into the country, where I got a complaint by a cold which has hung eight weeks upon me, and from which I am, at the expence of fifty ounces of blood, not yet free. I am afraid I muſt once more owe my recovery to warm weather, which ſeems to make the advances towards us.

"Such is my health, which will, I hope, ſoon grow better. In other reſpects I have no

* A part of this letter having been torn off, I have, from the evident meaning, ſupplied a few words and half words at the ends and beginnings of lines.

reaſon

1782. Ætat. 73. reaſon to complain. I know not that I have written any thing more generally commended than the Lives of the Poets; and have found the world willing enough to careſs me, if my health had invited me to be in much company: but this ſeaſon I have been almoſt wholly employed in nurſing myſelf.

"When ſummer comes I hope to ſee you again, and will not put off my viſit to the end of the year. I have lived ſo long in London, that I did not remember the difference of ſeaſons.

"Your health, when I ſaw you, was much improved. You will be prudent enough not to put it in danger. I hope, when we meet again, we ſhall all congratulate each other upon fair proſpects of longer life; though what are the pleaſures of the longeſt life, when placed in compariſon with a happy death? I am, dear Sir, yours moſt affectionately,

London, March, 21, 1781. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the ſame.

"DEAR SIR, [Without a date, but ſuppoſed to be about this time.]

"THAT you and dear Mrs. Careleſs ſhould have care or curioſity about my health, gives me that pleaſure which every man feels from finding himſelf not forgotten. In age we feel again that love of our native place and our early friends, which in the buſtle or amuſements of middle life, were overborn and ſuſpended. You and I ſhould now naturally cling to one another: we have outlived moſt of thoſe who could pretend to rival us in each other's kindneſs. In our walk through life we have dropped our companions, and are now to pick up ſuch

as

as chance may offer us, or to travel on alone. 1782.
You, indeed, have a ſiſter, with whom you can Ætat. 73.
divide the day: I have no natural friend left; but Providence has been pleaſed to preſerve me from neglect; I have not wanted ſuch alleviations of life as friendſhip could ſupply. My health has been, from my twentieth year, ſuch as has ſeldom afforded me a ſingle day of eaſe; but it is at leaſt not worſe: and I ſometimes make myſelf believe that it is better. My diſorders are, however, ſtill ſufficiently oppreſſive.

"I think of ſeeing Staffordſhire again this autumn, and intend to find my way through Birmingham, where I hope to ſee you and dear Mrs. Careleſs well. I am, Sir, your affectionate friend,

SAM. JOHNSON."

I wrote to him at different dates; regretted that I could not come to London this ſpring, but hoped we ſhould meet ſomewhere in the ſummer; mentioned the ſtate of my affairs, and ſuggeſted hopes of ſome preferment; informed him, that as "The Beauties of Johnſon" had been publiſhed in London, ſome obſcure ſcribbler had publiſhed at Edinburgh, what he called "Deformities of Johnſon."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"THE pleaſure which we uſed to receive from each other on Good-Friday and Eaſter-day, we muſt be this year content to miſs. Let us, however, pray for each other, and hope to ſee one another yet from time to time with mutual delight. My diſorder has been a cold, which impedes the organs of reſpiration, and kept me many weeks in a ſtate of great uneaſineſs,

1782. Ætat. 73. neſs, but by repeated phlebotomy it is now relieved; and next to the recovery of Mrs. Boſwell, I flatter myſelf, that you will rejoice at mine.

"What we ſhall do in the ſummer it is yet too early to conſider. You want to know what you ſhall do now; I do not think this time of buſtle and confuſion likely to produce any advantage to you. Every man has thoſe to reward and gratify who have contributed to his advancement. To come hither with ſuch expectations at the expence of borrowed money, which, I find, you know not where to borrow, can hardly be conſidered as prudent. I am ſorry to find, what your ſolicitation ſeems to imply, that you have already gone the whole length of your credit. This is to ſet the quiet of your whole life at hazard. If you anticipate your inheritance, you can at laſt inherit nothing; all that you receive muſt pay for the paſt. You muſt get a place, or pine in penury, with the empty name of a great eſtate. Poverty, my dear friend, is ſo great an evil, and pregnant with ſo much temptation, and ſo much miſery, that I cannot but earneſtly enjoin you to avoid it. Live on what you have, live if you can on leſs; do not borrow either for vanity or pleaſure; the vanity will end in ſhame, and the pleaſure in regret; ſtay therefore at home till you have ſaved money for your journey hither.

"The Beauties of Johnſon' are ſaid to have got money to the collector; if the 'Deformities' have the ſame ſucceſs, I ſhall be ſtill a more extenſive benefactor.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boſwell, who is, I hope, reconciled to me; and to the young people, whom I never have offended.

"You

"You never told me the ſucceſs of your plea againſt the ſolicitors. 1782. Ætat. 73.

"I am, dear Sir, your moſt affectionate

"London, March 28, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

Notwithſtanding his afflicted ſtate of body and mind this year, the following correſpondence affords a proof not only of his benevolence and conſcientious readineſs to relieve a good man from errour, but by his clothing one of the ſentiments in his "Rambler" in different language, not inferiour to that of the original, ſhews his extraordinary command of clear and forcible expreſſion.

A clergyman at Bath wrote to him, that in "The Morning Chronicle," a paſſage in "The Beauties of Johnſon," article DEATH, had been pointed out as ſuppoſed by ſome readers to recommend ſuicide, the words being, "To die is the fate of man; but to die with lingering anguiſh is generally his folly;" and reſpectfully ſuggeſting to him, that ſuch an erroneous notion of any ſentence in the writings of an acknowledged friend of religion and virtue, ſhould not paſs uncontradicted.

Johnſon thus anſwered the clergyman's letter:

To the Rev. Mr. ——— at Bath.

"SIR,

"BEING now in the country in a ſtate of recovery, as I hope, from a very oppreſſive diſorder, I cannot neglect the acknowledgement of your Chriſtian letter. The book called "The Beauties of Johnſon," is the production of I know not whom: I never ſaw it but by caſual inſpection, and conſidered myſelf as utterly diſengaged from its conſequences. Of the paſſage

1782. Ætat. 73. paſſage you mention, I remember ſome notice in ſome paper; but knowing that it muſt be miſrepreſented, I thought of it no more, nor do I know where to find it in my own books. I am accuſtomed to think little of news-papers; but an opinion ſo weighty and ſerious as yours has determined me to do, what I ſhould, without your ſeaſonable admonition, have omitted; and I will direct my thought to be ſhewn in its true ſtate.* If I could find the paſſage, I would direct you to it. I ſuppoſe the tenour is this:—'Acute diſeaſes are the immediate and inevitable ſtrokes of Heaven; but of them the pain is ſhort, and the concluſion ſpeedy: chronical diſorders, by which we are ſuſpended in tedious torture between life and death, are commonly the effect of our own miſconduct and intemperance. To die, &c.—This, Sir, you ſee, is all true, and all blameleſs. I hope, ſome time in the next week, to have all rectified. My health has been lately much ſhaken; if you favour this

* What follows appeared in the Morning Chronicle of May 29, 1782. "A correſpondent having mentioned, in the Morning Chronicle of Dec. 12, the laſt clauſe of the following paragraph, as ſeeming to favour ſuicide; we are requeſted to print the whole paſſage, that its true meaning may appear, which is not to recommend ſuicide, but exerciſe.

"Exerciſe cannot ſecure us from that diſſolution to which we are decreed: but while the ſoul and body continue united it can make the aſſociation pleaſing, and give probable hopes that they ſhall be disjoined by an eaſy ſeparation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diſeaſes are from Heaven, and chronical from ourſelves; the dart of death, indeed, falls from Heaven, but we poiſon it by our own miſconduct: to die is the fate of man; but to die with lingering anguiſh is generally his folly."

with

with any anſwer, it will be a comfort to me to know that I have your prayers. 1782. Ætat. 73.

"I am, &c.

"May 15, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

This letter, as might be expected, had its full effect, and the clergyman acknowledged it in grateful and pious terms*. The following letters require no extracts from mine to introduce them:

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"THE earneſtneſs and tenderneſs of your letter is ſuch, that I cannot think myſelf ſhewing it more reſpect than it claims by ſitting down to anſwer it the day on which I received it.

"This year has afflicted me with a very irkſome and ſevere diſorder. My reſpiration has been much impeded, and much blood has been taken away. I am now harraſſed by a catarrhous cough, from which my purpoſe is to ſeek relief by change of air; and I am, therefore preparing to go to Oxford.

"Whether I did right in diſſuading you from coming to London this ſpring, I will not determine. You have not loſt much by miſſing my company; I have ſcarcely been well for a ſingle week. I might have received comfort from your kindneſs; but you would have ſeen me afflicted, and, perhaps found me peeviſh. Whatever might have been your pleaſure or mine, I know not how I could have honeſtly adviſed you to come hither with borrowed money. Do not accuſtom yourſelf to conſider debts only as an inconvenience: you find it a calamity. Poverty takes away ſo many means of doing good,

* The correſpondence may be ſeen at length in the Gentleman's Magazine, Feb. 1786.

and

1782. Ætat. 73. and produces ſo much inability to reſiſt evil, both natural and moral, that it is by all virtuous means to be avoided. Conſider a man whoſe fortune is very narrow; whatever be his rank by birth, or whatever his reputation by intellectual excellence, what good can he do? or what evil can he prevent? That he cannot help the needy is evident, he has nothing to ſpare. But, perhaps, his advice or admonition may be uſeful. His poverty will deſtroy his influence: many more can find that he is poor, than that he is wiſe; and few will reverence the underſtanding that is of ſo little advantage to its owner. I ſay nothing of the perſonal wretchedneſs of a debtor, which, however, has paſſed into a proverb. Of riches, it is not neceſſary to write the praiſe. Let it, however, be remembered, that he who has money to ſpare, has it always in his power to benefit others; and of ſuch power a good man muſt always be deſirous.

"I am pleaſed with your account of Eaſter*. We ſhall meet, I hope, in autumn, both well and both cheerful; and part each the better for the other's company.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boſwell, and to the young charmers.

"I am, &c.

"London, June 3, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"BEING uncertain whether I ſhould have any call this autumn into the country, I did not

* Which I celebrated in the Church-of-England chapel at Edinburgh, founded by Lord Chief Baron Smith, of reſpectable and pious memory.

im-

immediately anſwer your kind letter. I have no call, but if you deſire to meet me at Aſhbourne, I believe I can come thither; if you had rather come to London, I can ſtay at Streatham; take your choice. 1782. Ætat. 73.

"This year has been very heavy. From the middle of January to the middle of June I was battered by one diſorder after another; I am now very much recovered, and hope ſtill to be better. What happineſs it is that Mrs. Boſwell has eſcaped.

"My 'Lives' are reprinting, and I have forgotten the authour of Gray's character*: write immediately, and it may be perhaps yet inſerted.

"Of London or Aſhbourne you have your free choice; at any place I ſhall be glad to ſee you. I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

'Aug. 24, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

On the 30th of Auguſt, I informed him that my honoured father had died that morning; a complaint under which he long laboured, having ſuddenly come to a criſis, while I was upon a viſit at the ſeat of Sir Charles Preſton, from whence I haſtened the day before, upon receiving a letter by expreſs.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE ſtruggled through this year with ſo much infirmity of body, and ſuch ſtrong impreſſions of the fragility of life, that death, wherever it appears, fills me with melancholy; and I cannot hear without emotion, of the removal of any one, whom I have known, into another ſtate.

* The Rev. Mr. Temple, vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall.

1782. Ætat. 73. "Your father's death had every circumſtance that could enable you to bear it; it was at a mature age, and it was expected; and as his general life had been pious, his thoughts had doubtleſs for many years paſt been turned upon eternity. That you did not find him ſenſible muſt doubtleſs grieve you; his diſpoſition towards you was undoubtedly that of a kind, though not of a fond father. Kindneſs, at leaſt actual, is in our power, but fondneſs is not; and if by negligence or imprudence you had extinguiſhed his fondneſs, he could not at will rekindle it. Nothing then remained between you but mutual forgiveneſs of each other's faults, and mutual deſire of each other's happineſs.

"I ſhall long to know his final diſpoſition of his fortune.

"You, dear Sir, have now a new ſtation, and have therefore new cares, and new employments. Life, as Cowley ſeems to ſay, ought to reſemble a well ordered poem; of which one rule generally received is, that the exordium ſhould be ſimple, and ſhould promiſe little. Begin your new courſe of life with the leaſt ſhow, and the leaſt expence poſſible; you may at pleaſure encreaſe both, but you cannot eaſily diminiſh them. Do not think your eſtate your own, while any can call upon you for money which you cannot pay; therefore, begin with timorous parſimony. Let it be your firſt care not to be in any man's debt.

"When the thoughts are extended to a future ſtate, the preſent life ſeems hardly worthy of all thoſe principles of conduct, and maxims of prudence, which one generation of men has tranſmitted to another; but upon a cloſer view, when it is perceived how much evil is produced, and how much good is impeded by embarraſſment

ment and diſtreſs, and how little room the expedients of poverty leave for the exerciſe of virtue; its ſorrows manifeſt that the boundleſs importance of the next life, enforces ſome attention to the intereſts of this. 1782. Ætat. 73.

"Be kind to the old ſervants, and ſecure the kindneſs of the agents and factors; do not diſguſt them by aſperity, or unwelcome gaiety, or apparent ſuſpicion. From them you muſt learn the real ſtate of your affairs, the characters of your tenants, and the value of your lands.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boſwell; I think her expectations from air and exerciſe are the beſt that ſhe can form.

"I forget whether I told you that Raſay has been here; we dined cheerfully together. I entertained lately a young gentleman from Coriatachat.

"I received your letters only this morning. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

"London, Sept. 7, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

In anſwer to my next letter, I received one from him, diſſuading me from haſtening to him as I had propoſed; what is proper for publication is the following paragraph, equally juſt and tender:

"One expence, however, I would not have you to ſpare: let nothing be omitted that can preſerve Mrs. Boſwell, though it ſhould be neceſſary to tranſplant her for a time into a ſofter climate. She is the prop and ſtay of your life. How much muſt your children ſuffer by loſing her?"

My wife was now ſo much convinced of his ſincere friendſhip for me, and regard for her, that ſhe, without any ſuggeſtion on my part, wrote him a very polite and grateful letter.

1782. Ætat. 73.

Dr. JOHNSON *to Mrs.* BOSWELL.

"DEAR LADY,

"I have not often received ſo much pleaſure as from your invitation to Auchinleck. The journey thither and back is, indeed, too great for the latter part of the year; but if my health were fully recovered, I would ſuffer no little heat and cold, nor a wet or a rough road to keep me from you. I am, indeed, not without hope of ſeeing Auchinleck again, but to make it a pleaſant place I muſt ſee its lady well, and briſk and airy. For my ſake, therefore, among many greater reaſons, take care, dear madam, of your health, ſpare no expence, and want no attendance that can procure eaſe, or preſerve it. Be very careful to keep your mind quiet; and do not think it too much to give an account of your recovery to madam, your, &c.

"London, Sept. 7, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"HAVING paſſed almoſt this whole year in a ſucceſſion of diſorders, I went in October to Brighthelmſton, whither I came in a ſtate of ſo much weakneſs, that I reſted four times in walking between the inn and the lodging. By phyſick and abſtinence I grew better, and am now reaſonably eaſy, though at a great diſtance from health. I am afraid, however, that health begins, after ſeventy, and often long before, to have a meaning different from that which it had at thirty. But it is culpable to murmur at the eſtabliſhed order of the creation, as it is vain to oppoſe it. He that lives muſt grow old;

old; and he that would rather grow old than die, has GOD to thank for the infirmities of old age. 1782. Ætat. 73.

"At your long ſilence I am rather angry. You do not, ſince now you are the head of your houſe, think it worth your while to try whether you or your friend can live longer without writing, nor ſuſpect after ſo many years of friendſhip, that when I do not write to you, I forget you. Put all ſuch uſeleſs jealouſies out of your head, and diſdain to regulate your own practice by the practice of another, or by any other principle than the deſire of doing good.

"Your œconomy, I ſuppoſe, begins now to be ſettled; your expences are adjuſted to your revenue, and all your people in their proper places. Reſolve not to be poor: whatever you have, ſpend leſs. Poverty is a great enemy to human happineſs, it certainly deſtroys liberty, and it makes ſome virtues impracticable, and others extremely difficult.

"Let me know the hiſtory of your life, ſince your acceſſion to the eſtate. How many houſes, how many cows how much land in your own hand, and what bargains you make with your tenants.

* * * * *

"Of my 'Lives of the Poets,' they have printed a new edition in octavo, I hear, of three thouſand. Did I give a ſet to Lord Hailes? if I did not, I will do it out of theſe. What did you make of all your copy?

"Mrs. Thrale and the three miſſes are now for the winter, in Argyll-ſtreet. Sir Joſhua Reynolds has been out of order, but is well again;

1782. Ætat. 73. again; and I am, dear Sir, your affectionate humble ſervant,

"London, Dec. 7, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

"DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, Dec. 20, 1782.

"I WAS made happy by your kind letter, which gave us the agreeable hopes of ſeeing you in Scotland again.

"I am much flattered by the concern you are pleaſed to take in my recovery. I am better, and hope to have it in my power to convince you by my attention, of how much conſequence I eſteem your health to the world and to myſelf. I remain, Sir, with grateful reſpect,

"Your obliged and obedient ſervant,

"MARGARET BOSWELL."

The death of Mr. Thrale had made a very material alteration upon Johnſon, with reſpect to his reception in that family. The manly authority of the huſband no longer curbed the lively exuberance of the lady; and as her vanity had been fully gratified, by having the Coloſſus of Literature attached to her for many years, ſhe gradually became leſs aſſiduous to pleaſe him. Whether her attachment to him was already divided by another object, I am unable to aſcertain; but it is plain that Johnſon's penetration was alive to her neglect or forced attention; for on the 6th of October this year, we find him making a "parting uſe of the library" at Streatham, and pronouncing a prayer, which he compoſed "On leaving Mr. Thrale's family*."

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 214.

"Almighty

1782. Ætat. 73

"Almighty God, Father of all mercy, help me by thy grace, that I may, with humble and ſincere thankfulneſs, remember the comforts and conveniencies which I have enjoyed at this place; and that I may reſign them with holy ſubmiſſion, equally truſting in thy protection when Thou giveſt, and when Thou takeſt away. Have mercy on me, O Lord, have mercy upon me.

"To thy fatherly protection, O Lord, I commend this family. Bleſs, guide, and defend them, that they may ſo paſs through this world, as finally to enjoy in thy preſence everlaſting happineſs, for Jesus Christ's ſake. Amen."

One cannot read this prayer, without ſome emotions not very favourable to the lady whoſe conduct occaſioned it.

In one of his memorandum books I find, "Sunday, went to church at Streatham. *Templo valedixi cum oſculo.*"

He met Mr. Philip Metcalfe often at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, and other places, and was a good deal with him at Brighthelmſton this autumn, being pleaſed at once with his excellent table and animated converſation. Mr. Metcalfe ſhewed him great reſpect, and ſent him a note that he might have the uſe of his carriage whenever he pleaſed. Johnſon (3d Oct. 1782) returned this polite anſwer:—"Mr. Johnſon is very much obliged by the kind offer of the carriage; but he has no deſire of uſing Mr. Metcalfe's carriage, except when he can have the pleaſure of Mr. Metcalfe's company." Mr. Metcalfe could not but be highly pleaſed that his company was thus valued by Johnſon, and he frequently attended him in airings. They alſo went together

1782. Ætat. 73. to Cirenceſter, and they viſited Petworth and Cowdery, the venerable ſeat of the Lords Montacute. "Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) I ſhould like to ſtay here four-and-twenty hours. We ſee here how our anceſtors lived."

That his curioſity, however, was unabated, appears from two letters to Mr. John Nichols, of the 10th and 20th of October this year. In one he ſays, "I have looked into your 'Anecdotes,' and you will hardly thank a lover of literary hiſtory for telling you, that he has been much informed and gratified. I wiſh you would add your own diſcoveries and intelligence to thoſe of Dr. Rawlinſon, and undertake the Supplement to Wood. Think of it." In the other, "I wiſh, Sir, you could obtain ſome fuller information of Jortin, Markland, and Thirlby. They were three contemporaries of great eminence."

To Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"DEAR SIR,

"I HEARD yeſterday of your late diſorder, and ſhould think ill of myſelf if I had heard of it without alarm. I heard likewiſe of your recovery, which I ſincerely wiſh to be complete and permanent. Your country has been in danger of loſing one of its brighteſt ornaments, and I of loſing one of my oldeſt and kindeſt friends: but I hope you will ſtill live long for the honour of the nation; and that more enjoyment of your elegance, your intelligence, and your benevolence, is ſtill preſerved for, dear Sir,

"Your moſt affectionate, &c.

"Brighthelmſton, Nov. 14, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

The

The Reverend Mr. Wilſon having dedicated to him his "Archeological Dictionary," that mark of reſpect was thus acknowledged. 1782. Ætat. 73.

To the Rev. Mr. WILSON, *Clitheroe, Lancaſhire.*

"REVEREND SIR,

"THAT I have long omitted to return you thanks for the honour conferred on me by your Dedication, I intreat you with great earneſtneſs not to conſider as more faulty than it is. A very importunate and oppreſſive diſorder has for ſome time debarred me from the pleaſures, and obſtructed me in the duties of life. The eſteem and kindneſs of wiſe and good men is one of the laſt pleaſures which I can be content to loſe; and gratitude to thoſe from whom this pleaſure is received, is a duty of which I hope never to be reproached with the final neglect. I therefore now return you thanks for the notice which I have received from you; and which I conſider as giving to my name not only more bulk, but more weight; not only extending its ſuperficies, but as increaſing its value. Your book was evidently wanted, and will, I hope, find its way into the ſchool, to which, however, I do not mean to confine it; for no man has ſo much ſkill in ancient rites and practices as not to want it. As I ſuppoſe myſelf to owe part of your kindneſs to my excellent friend, Dr. Patten, he has likewiſe a juſt claim to my acknowledgements, which I hope you, Sir, will tranſmit. There will ſoon appear a new edition of my Poetical Biography; if you will accept of a copy to keep me in your mind, be pleaſed to let me know how it may be conveniently conveyed

to

1782. to you. The preſent is ſmall, but is given with good will by, Reverend Sir, your moſt, &c.
Ætat. 73. "Dec. 31, 1782. SAM. JOHNSON."

1783. In 1783 he was more ſeverely afflicted than ever, as will appear in the courſe of his correſpondence; but ſtill the ſame ardour for literature, the ſame conſtant piety, the ſame kindneſs for his friends, and the ſame vivacity, both in converſation and writing, diſtinguiſhed him.

Having given Dr. Johnſon a full account of what I was doing at Auchinleck, and particularly mentioned what I knew would pleaſe him, my having brought an old man of eighty-eight from a lonely cottage to a comfortable habitation within my encloſures, where he had good neighbours near to him, I received an anſwer in February, of which I extract what follows:

"I am delighted with your account of your activity at Auchinleck, and wiſh the old gentleman, whom you have ſo kindly removed, may live long to promote your proſperity by his prayers. You have now a new character and new duties; think on them, and practiſe them.

"Make an impartial eſtimate of your revenue, and whatever it is, live upon leſs. Reſolve never to be poor. Frugality is not only the baſis of quiet, but of beneficence. No man can help others that wants help himſelf; we muſt have enough before we have to ſpare.

"I am glad to find that Mrs. Boſwell grows well; and hope that to keep her well, no care or caution will be omitted. May you long live happily together.

"When you come hither, pray bring with you Baxter's Anacreon. I cannot get that edition in London."

On

On Friday March 21, having arrived in London the night before, I was glad to find him at Mrs. Thrale's houſe, in Argyll-ſtreet, appearances of friendſhip between them being ſtill kept up. I was ſhewn into his room, and after the firſt ſalutation he ſaid, "I am glad you are come. I am very ill." He looked pale, and was diſtreſſed with a difficulty of breathing. But he ſoon aſſumed his uſual ſtrong animated ſtyle of converſation. Seeing me now for the firſt time as a *Laird*, or proprietor of land, he began, "Sir, the ſuperiority of a country-gentleman over the people upon his eſtate is very agreeable; and he who ſays he does not feel it to be agreeable, lies: for it muſt be agreeable to have a caſual ſuperiority over thoſe who are by nature equal with us. BOSWELL. "Yet, Sir, we ſee great proprietors of land who prefer living in London." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, the pleaſure of living in London, the intellectual ſuperiority that is enjoyed there, may counterbalance the other. Beſides, Sir, a man may prefer the ſtate of the country-gentleman upon the whole, and yet there may never be a moment when he is willing to make the change to quit London for it." He ſaid, "It is better to have five *per cent.* out of land than out of money, becauſe it is more ſecure; but the readineſs of transference, and promptneſs of intereſt, make many people rather chooſe the funds. Nay, there is another diſadvantage belonging to land, compared with money. A man is not ſo much afraid of being a hard creditor as of being a hard landlord." BOSWELL. "Becauſe there is a ſort of kindly connection between a landlord and his tenants." JOHNSON. "No, Sir, many landlords with us never ſee their tenants. It is becauſe if a landlord drives away his tenants, 1783. Ætat. 74.

1783. nants, he may not get others; whereas the demand for money is so great, it may always be lent."

Ætat. 74.

He talked with regret and indignation of the factious opposition to government at this time, and imputed it, in a great measure to the Revolution. "Sir, (said he, in a low voice, having come nearer to me, while his old prejudices seemed to be fermenting in his mind,) this Hanoverian family is *isolée* here. They have no friends. Now the Stuarts had friends who stuck by them so late as 1745. When the right of the King is not reverenced, there will be no reverence for those appointed by the King."

His observation that the preient royal family has no friends, has been too much justified by the very ungrateful behaviour of many who were under great obligations to his Majesty; at the same time there are honourable exceptions; and the very next year after this conversation, and ever since, the King has had as extensive and generous support as ever was given to any monarch, and has had the satisfaction of knowing that he was more and more endeared to his people.

He repeated to me his verses on Mr. Levett, with an emotion which gave them full effect; and then he was pleased to say, "You must be as much with me as you can. You have done me good. You cannot think how much better I am since you came in."

He sent a message to acquaint Mrs. Thrale that I was arrived. I had not seen her since her husband's death. She soon appeared, and favoured me with an invitation to stay to dinner, which I accepted. There was no other company but herself and three of her daughters, Dr. Johnson, and I. She too, said she was very glad I was come, for she was going to Bath, and should

ſhould have been ſorry to leave Dr. Johnſon before I came. This ſeemed to be attentive and kind, and I who had not been informed of any change, imagined all to be as well as formerly. He was little inclined to talk at dinner, and went to ſleep after it; but when he joined us in the drawing-room, he ſeemed revived, and was again himſelf. 1783. Ætat. 74.

Talking of converſation, he ſaid, "There muſt, in the firſt place, be knowledge, there muſt be materials;—in the ſecond place, there muſt be a command of words;—in the third place, there muſt be imagination, to place things in ſuch views as they are not commonly ſeen in; and in the fourth place, there muſt be preſence of mind, and a reſolution that is not to be overcome by failures; this laſt is an eſſential requiſite; for want of it many people do not excel in converſation. Now *I* want it, I throw up the game upon loſing a trick." I wondered to hear him talk thus of himſelf, and ſaid, "I don't know, Sir, how this may be, but I am ſure you beat other people's cards out of their hands." I doubt whether he heard this remark. While he went on talking triumphantly, I was fixed in admiration, and ſaid to Mrs. Thrale, "O, for ſhort-hand to take this down."—"You'll carry it all in your head, (ſaid ſhe,) a long head is as good as ſhort-hand."

It has been obſerved and wondered at, that Mr. Charles Fox never talked with any freedom in the preſence of Dr. Johnſon, though it is well known, and I myſelf can witneſs, that his converſation is various, fluent, and exceedingly agreeable. Johnſon's experience, however, founded him in going on thus: Fox never talks in private company, not from any determination not to talk, but becauſe he has not the firſt

1783. Ætat. 74. first motion. A man who is used to the applause of the House of Commons, has no wish for that of a private company. A man accustomed to throw for a thousand pounds, if set down to throw for sixpence, would not be at the pains to count his dice. Burke's talk is the ebullition of his mind; he does not talk from a desire of distinction, but because his mind is full."

He thus curiously characterised one of our old acquaintance: "******* is a good man, Sir; but he is a vain man, and a liar. He, however, only tells lies of vanity; of victories, for instance, in conversation which never happened." This alluded to a story which I had repeated from that gentleman, to entertain Johnson with its wild bravado: "This Johnson, Sir, (said he,) whom you are all afraid of, will shrink if you come close to him in argument, and roar as loud as he. He once maintained the paradox, that there is no beauty but in utility. 'Sir, (said I,) what say you to the peacock's tail, which is one of the most beautiful objects in nature, but would have as much utility if its feathers were all of one colour.' He *felt* what I thus produced, and had recourse to his usual expedient, ridicule; exclaiming, 'A peacock has a tail, and a fox has a tail;' and then he burst out into a laugh. 'Well, Sir, (said I, with a strong voice, looking him full in the face) you have unkennelled your fox; pursue him if you dare.' He had not a word to say, Sir." Johnson told me that this was a fiction from beginning to end.'*

After

* Were I to insert all the stories which have been told of contests boldly maintained with him, imaginary victories obtained over him, of reducing him to silence, and of making him own that his antagonists had the better of him in

After muſing for ſome time, he ſaid, "I wonder how I ſhould have any enemies; for I do harm to nobody*." BOSWELL. "In the firſt place, Sir, you will be pleaſed to recollect, that you ſet out with attacking the Scotch; ſo you got a whole nation for your enemies." JOHNSON. "Why I own, that by my definition of *oats* I meant to vex them. BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, can you trace the cauſe of your antipathy to the Scotch." JOHNSON. "I can not, Sir." JOHNSON. "Then, Sir, old Mr. Sheridan has found out a very good reaſon." 1783. Ætat. 74.

Surely the moſt obſtinate and ſulky nationality, the moſt determined averſion to this great and good man, muſt be cured, when he is ſeen thus playing with one of his prejudices, of which he candidly admitted that he could not tell the reaſon. It was, however, probably owing to his having had in his view the worſt part of the Scottiſh nation, the needy adventurers, many of whom he thought were advanced beyond their merits, by means which he did not

in argument, my volumes would ſwell to an immoderate ſize. One inſtance, I find, has circulated both in converſation and in print; that when he would not allow the Scotch writers to have merit, the late Dr. Roſe, of Chiſwick, aſſerted, that he could name one Scotch writer, who Dr. Johnſon himſelf would allow to have written better than any man of the age; and upon Johnſon's aſking who it was, anſwered "Lord Bute, when he ſigned the warrant for your penſion." Upon which Johnſon, ſtruck with the repartee, acknowledged this *was* true. When I mentioned it to Johnſon, "Sir, [ſaid he,] if Roſe ſaid this, I never heard it.

* This reflection was very natural in a man of a good heart, who was not conſcious of any ill-will to mankind, though the ſharp ſayings which were ſometimes produced by his diſcrimination and vivacity, and which he perhaps did not recollect, were, I am afraid, too often remembered with reſentment.

approve,

1783. Ætat. 74. approve. Had he in his early life been in Scotland, and ſeen the worthy, ſenſible, independent gentlemen, who live rationally and hoſpitably at home, he never could have entertained ſuch unfavourable and unjuſt notions of his fellow-ſubjects. And accordingly we find, that when he did viſit Scotland, in the latter period of his life, he was fully ſenſible of all that it deſerved, as I have already pointed out, when ſpeaking of his "Journey to the Weſtern Iſlands."

Next day, Saturday, March 22, I found him ſtill at Mrs. Thrale's, but he told me that he was to go to his own houſe in the afternoon. He was better, but I perceived that he was but an unruly patient, for Dr. Pepys, who viſited him, while I was with him ſaid, "If you were *tractable*, Sir, I ſhould preſcribe for you."

I related to him a remark which a reſpectable friend had made to me, upon the then ſtate of Government, when thoſe who had been long in oppoſition had attained to power, it was ſuppoſed againſt the inclination of the Sovereign. "You need not be uneaſy (ſaid this gentleman) about the King. He laughs at them all; he plays them one againſt another." JOHNSON. "Don't think ſo, Sir. The King is as much oppreſſed as a man can be. If he plays them one againſt another he *wins* nothing."

I had paid a viſit to General Oglethorpe in the morning, and was told by him that Dr. Johnſon ſaw company on Saturday evenings, and he would meet me at Johnſon's, that night.—When I mentioned this to Johnſon, not doubting that it would pleaſe him, as he had a great value for Oglethorpe, the fretfulneſs of his diſeaſe unexpectedly ſhewed itſelf; his anger ſuddenly kindled, and he ſaid, with vehemence—"Did not you tell him not to come? Am I to be

be *hunted* in this manner?" I ſatisfied him that I could not divine that the viſit would not be convenient, and that I certainly could not take it upon me of my own accord, to forbid the General. 1784. Ætat. 74.

I found Dr. Johnſon in the evening in Mrs. Williams's room, at tea and coffee with her and Mrs. Deſmoulins, who were alſo both ill; it was a ſad ſcene, and he was not in a very good humour. He ſaid of a performance that had lately come out, "Sir, if you would ſearch all the mad-houſes in England, you would not find ten men who would write ſo, and think it ſenſe."

I was glad when General Oglethorpe's arrival was announced; and we left the ladies.—Dr. Johnſon attended him in the parlour, and was as courteous as ever. The General ſaid he was buſy reading the writers of the middle age. Johnſon ſaid they were very curious. OGLETHORPE. "The Houſe of Commons has uſurped the power of the nation's money, and uſed it tyrannically. Government is now carried on by corrupt influence, inſtead of the inherent right in the King." JOHNSON. "Sir, the want of inherent right in the King occaſions all this diſturbance. What we did at the Revolution was neceſſary: but it broke our conſtitution*." OGLETHORPE. "My father did not think it neceſſary."

* I have, in my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," fully expreſſed my ſentiments upon this ſubject. The Revolution was *neceſſary*, but not a ſubject for *glory*; becauſe it for a long time blaſted the generous feelings of *Loyalty*.—And now when by the benignant effect of time the preſent Royal Family are eſtabliſhed in our *affections*, how unwiſe is it to revive by celebrations the memory of a ſhock, which it would ſurely have been better that our conſtitution had not required.

1783. Ætat. 74. On Sunday, March 23, I breakfaſted with Dr. Johnſon, who ſeemed much relieved, having taken opium the night before. He however proteſted againſt it, as a remedy that ſhould be given with the utmoſt reluctance, and only in extreme neceſſity. I mentioned how commonly it was uſed in Turkey, and therefore it could not be ſo pernicious as he apprehended. He grew warm, and ſaid, "Turks take opium, and Chriſtians take opium; but Ruſſel, in his account of Aleppo, tells us, that it is as diſgraceful in Turkey to take too much opium, as it is with us to get drunk. Sir, it is amazing how things are exaggerated. A gentleman was lately telling in a company where I was preſent, that in France, as ſoon as a man of faſhion marries, he takes an opera girl into keeping; and this he mentioned as a general cuſtom." Pray, Sir, (ſaid I,) how many opera girls may there be?—He anſwered, 'About fourſcore.' Well then, Sir, (ſaid I,) you ſee there can be no more than fourſcore men of faſhion who can do this."

Mrs. Deſmoulins made tea; and ſhe and I talked before him upon a topick which he had once bore patiently from me when we were by ourſelves—his not complaining of the world becauſe he was not called to ſome great office, nor had attained to great wealth. He flew into a violent paſſion, I confeſs with ſome juſtice, and commanded us to have done. "Nobody (ſaid he) has a right to talk in this manner, to bring before a man his own character, and the events of his life, when he does not chooſe it ſhould be done. I never have ſought the world; the world was not to ſeek me. It is rather wonderful that ſo much has been done for me. All the complaints which are made of the world are unjuſt. I never knew a man of merit neglected.

glected. It was generally by his own fault that he failed of ſucceſs. A man may hide his head in a hole. He may go into the country, and publiſh a book now and then, which nobody reads, and then complain he is neglected. There is no reaſon why any perſon ſhould exert himſelf for a man who has written a good book. He has not written it for any individual. I may as well make a preſent to the poſt-man who brings me a letter. When patronage was limited, an authour expected to find a Mecænas, and complained if he did not find one. Why ſhould he complain? This Mecænas has others as good as he, or others who have got the ſtart of him."— BOSWELL: "But ſurely, Sir, you will allow that there are many men of merit at the bar who never get practice." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are ſure that practice is got from an opinion that the perſon employed deſerves it beſt; ſo that if a man of merit at the bar does not get practice, it is from errour, not from injuſtice. He is not neglected. A horſe that is brought to market may not be bought, though he is a very good horſe: but that is from ignorance, not from intention." 1783. Ætat. 74.

There was in this diſcourſe much novelty, ingenuity, and diſcrimination, ſuch as is ſeldom to be found. Yet I cannot help thinking that men of merit, who have no ſucceſs in life, may be forgiven for *lamenting*, if they are not allowed to *complain*. They may conſider it as *hard* that their merit ſhould not have its ſuitable diſtinction. If there is no internal injuſtice towards them on the part of the world, becauſe their merit has not been perceived, they may repine againſt *fortune*, or *fate*, or by whatever name they chooſe to call the ſuppoſed mythological power of *Deſtiny*. It has, however, occurred to me

1783. Ætat. 74. as a conſolatory thought, that men of merit, ſhould conſider thus: How much harder would it be if the ſame men had both all the merit and all the proſperity? Would not this be a miſerable diſtribution for the poor dunces?—Would men of merit exchange their intellectual ſuperiority, and the enjoyments ariſing from it, for external diſtinction, and the pleaſures of wealth? If they would not, let them not envy others, who are poor where they are rich, a compenſation which is made to them. Let them look inwards and be ſatisfied; recollecting with conſcious pride what Virgil finely ſays of the *Corycius Senex*, and which I have, in another place*, with truth and ſincerity applied to Mr. Burke:

"*Regum æquabat opes animis.*"

On the ſubject of the right employment of wealth, Johnſon obſerved, "A man cannot make a bad uſe of his money, ſo far as regards Society, if he does not hoard it. For if he either ſpends it or lends it out, Society has the benefit. It is in general better to ſpend money than to give it away; for induſtry is more promoted by ſpending money, than by giving it away. A man who ſpends his money is ſure he is doing good with it: he is not ſo ſure when he gives it away. A man who ſpends ten thouſand a year will do more good than a man who ſpends two thouſand and gives away eight."

In the evening I came to him again. He was rather fretful from his illneſs. A gentleman aſked him, whether he had been abroad to-day. "Don't talk ſo childiſhly, (ſaid he).—

* Letter to the People of Scotland againſt the Attempt to diminiſh the Number of the Lords of Seſſion. 1785.

You

You may as well aſk if I hanged myſelf to-day." 1783.
I mentioned politicks. JOHNSON. "Sir, I'd Ætat. 74.
as ſoon have a man break my bones as talk to me of publick affairs, internal or external. I have lived to ſee things all as bad as they can be."

Having mentioned his friend the ſecond Lord Southwell, he ſaid, "Lord Southwell was the higheſt bred man without inſolence that I ever was in company with; the moſt *qualified* I ever ſaw. Lord Orrery was not dignified: Lord Cheſterfield was, but he was inſolent. Lord ****.***** is a man of coarſe manners, but a man of abilities and information. I don't ſay he is a man I would ſet at the head of a nation, though perhaps he may be as good as the next Prime Miniſter that comes. But he is a man to be at the head of a Club;—I don't ſay *our* CLUB; for there's no ſuch Club. BOSWELL.—"But, Sir, was not he once a factious man?"—JOHNSON. "O yes, Sir; as factious a fellow as could be found: one who was for ſinking us all into the mob." BOSWELL. "How then, Sir, did he get into favour with the King?" JOHNSON. "Becauſe, Sir, I ſuppoſe he promiſed the King to do whatever the King pleaſed."

He ſaid, "Goldſmith's blundering ſpeech to Lord Shelburne, which has been ſo often mentioned, and which he really did make to him, was only a blunder in emphaſis:—'I wonder they ſhould call your Lordſhip *Malagrida*, for Malagrida was a very good man;'—meant, I wonder they ſhould uſe *Malagrida* as a term of reproach."

Soon after this time I had an opportunity of ſeeing, by means of one of his friends, a proof that his talents, as well as his obliging ſervice to authours, were ready as ever. He had re-

viſed

1783. Æt. 74. viſed "The Village," an admirable poem, by the Reverend Mr. Crabbe. Its ſentiments as to the falſe notions of ruſtick happineſs and ruſtick virtue, were quite congenial with his own; and he had taken the trouble not only to ſuggeſt ſlight corrections and variations, but to furniſh ſome lines, when he thought he could give the writer's meaning better than in the words of the manuſcript*.

On Sunday, March 30, I found him at home in the evening, and had the pleaſure to meet with Dr. Brockleſby, whoſe reading and knowledge of life, and good ſpirits, ſupply him with a never-failing ſource of converſation. He mentioned a reſpectable gentleman, who became extremely penurious near the cloſe of his life.—Johnſon ſaid there muſt have been a degree of madneſs about him. "Not at all Sir, (ſaid Dr. Brockleſby,) his judgement was entire."—

* I ſhall give an inſtance, marking the original by Roman, and Johnſon's ſubſtitution in Italick characters:

"In fairer ſcenes, where peaceful pleaſures ſpring,
"Tityrus, the pride of Mantuan ſwains, might ſing:
"But charm'd by him, or ſmitten with his views,
"Shall modern poets court the Mantuan muſe?
"From Truth and Nature ſhall we widely ſtray,
"Where Fancy leads, or Virgil led the way?"

"*On Mincio's banks, in Cæſar's bounteous reign,*
"*If Tityrus found the golden age again,*
"*Muſt ſleepy bards the flattering dream prolong,*
"*Mechanick echos of the Mantuan ſong?*
"*From Truth and Nature ſhall we widely ſtray,*
"*Where Virgil, not where Fancy, leads the way.*"

Here we find Johnſon's poetical and critical powers undiminiſhed. I muſt, however, obſerve, that the aids he gave to this poem, as to "The Traveller" and "Deſerted Village" of Goldſmith, were ſo ſmall as by no means to impair the diſtinguiſhed merit of the authour.

Unluckily,

Unluckily, however, he mentioned that although he had a fortune of twenty-ſeven thouſand pounds, he denied himſelf many comforts, from an apprehenſion that he could not afford them. "Nay, Sir, (cried Johnſon,) when the judgement is ſo diſturbed that a man cannot count, that is pretty well." 1783. Ætat. 74.

I ſhall here inſert a few of Johnſon's ſayings, without the formality of dates, as they have no reference to any particular time or place.

"The more a man extends and varies his acquaintance the better." This, however, was meant with a juſt reſtriction; for, he on another occaſion ſaid to me, "Sir, a man may be ſo much of every thing, that he is nothing of any thing."

"Raiſing the wages of day-labourers is wrong; for it does not make them live better, but only makes them idler, and idleneſs is a very bad thing for human nature."

"It is a very good cuſtom to keep a journal for a man's own uſe; he may write upon a card a day all that is neceſſary to be written, after he has had experience of life. At firſt there is a great deal to be written, becauſe there is a great deal of novelty. But when once a man has ſettled his opinions, there is ſeldom much to be ſet down."

"There is nothing wonderful in the journal which we ſee Swift kept in London, for it contains ſlight topicks, and it might ſoon be written.

I praiſed the accuracy of an account book of a private perſon whom I mentioned. JOHNSON. "Keeping accounts, Sir, is of no uſe when a man is ſpending his own money, and has nobody to whom he is to account. You won't eat leſs beef to-day, becauſe you have written down what

1783. Ætat. 74. what it coſt yeſterday." I mentioned a lady who thought as he did, ſo that her huſband could not get her to keep an account of the expence of the family, as ſhe thought it enough that ſhe never exceeded the ſum allowed her.—JOHNSON. "Sir, it is fit ſhe ſhould keep an account, becauſe her huſband wiſhes it; but I do not ſee its uſe." I maintained that keeping an account has this advantage, that it ſatisfies a man that his money has not been loſt or ſtolen, which he might ſometimes be apt to imagine were there no written ſtate of his expence; and beſides, a calculation of œconomy ſo as not to exceed one's income, cannot be made without a view of the different articles in figures, that one may ſee how to retrench in ſome particulars leſs neceſſary than others. This he did not attempt to anſwer.

Talking of an acquaintance of ours, whoſe narratives, which abounded in curious and intereſting topicks, were unhappily found to be very fabulous; I mentioned Lord Mansfield's having ſaid to me, "Suppoſe we believe one *half* of what he tells." JOHNSON. "Aye; but we don't know *which* half to believe. By his lying we loſe not only our reverence for him, but all comfort in his converſation." BOSWELL.—"May we not take it as amuſing fiction?" JOHNSON. "Sir, the misfortune is, that you will ſenſibly believe as much of it as you incline."

It is remarkable, that notwithſtanding their congeniality in politicks, he never was acquainted with a late noble judge, whom I have heard ſpeak of him as a writer, with great reſpect.—Johnſon, I know not upon what degree of inveſtigation, entertained no exalted opinion of his Lordſhip's intellectual character. Talking of him to me one day, he ſaid, 'It is wonderful,

ful, Sir, with how little real ſuperiority of mind men can make an eminent figure in publick life." He expreſſed himſelf to the ſame purpoſe concerning another law Lord, who, it ſeems, once took a fancy to aſſociate with the wits of London; but with ſo little ſucceſs, that Foote ſaid, "What can he mean by coming among us? He is not only dull himſelf, but the cauſe of dullneſs in others." Trying him by the teſt of his colloquial powers, Johnſon had found him very defective. He once ſaid to Sir Joſhua Reynolds, "This man now has been ten years about town, and has made nothing of it;" meaning as a companion*. He ſaid to me, "I never heard any thing from him in company that was at all ſtriking; and depend upon it, Sir, it is when you come cloſe to a man in converſation, that you diſcover what his real abilities are; to make a ſpeech in a publick aſſembly is a knack. Now I honour Thurlow, Sir; Thurlow is a fine fellow; he fairly puts his mind to yours." 1783. Ætat. 74.

After repeating to him ſome of his pointed lively ſayings, I ſaid, "It is a pity, Sir, you don't always remember your own good things, that you may have a laugh when you will."—JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, it is better that I forget them, that I may be reminded of them and have a laugh brought to my recollection."

When I recalled his having ſaid as we ſailed upon Lochlomond, "That if he wore any thing fine, it ſhould be *very* fine;" I obſerved that all

* Knowing as well as I do, what preciſion and elegance of oratory his Lordſhip can diſplay, I cannot but ſuſpect that his unfavourable appearance in a ſocial circle, which drew ſuch animadverſions upon him, muſt be owing to a cold affectation of conſequence, from being reſerved and ſtiff. If it be ſo, and he might be an agreeable man if he would, we cannot be ſorry that he miſſes his aim.

his

1783. Ætat. 74. his thoughts were upon a great ſcale. JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, Sir, every man will have as fine a thing as he can get; as a large diamond for his ring." BOSWELL. "Pardon me, Sir; a man of a narrow mind will not think of it, a ſlight trinket will ſatisfy him.

'*Nec ſufferre queat majoris pondera gemmæ.*"

I told him I ſhould ſend him ſome "Eſſays" which I had written, which I hoped he would be ſo good as to read, and pick out the good ones. JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, ſend me only the good ones; don't make *me* pick them."

On Thurſday, April 10, I introduced to him, at his houſe in Bolt-court, the Honourable and Reverend William Stuart, ſon of the Earl of Bute; a gentleman truly worthy of being known to Johnſon, being, with all the advantages of high birth, learning, travel, and elegant manners, an exemplary pariſh prieſt in every reſpect.

After ſome compliments on both ſides, the tour which Johnſon and I had made to the Hebrides was mentioned.—JOHNSON. "I got an acquiſition of more ideas by it than by any thing that I remember. I ſaw quite a different ſyſtem of life." BOSWELL. "You would not like to make the ſame journey again." JOHNSON. "Why no, Sir; not the ſame: it is a tale told. *Gravina*, an Italian critick, obſerves, that every man deſires to ſee that of which he has read; but no man deſires to read an account of what he has ſeen. So much does deſcription fall ſhort of reality. Deſcription only excites curioſity: ſeeing ſatisfies it. Other people may go and ſee the Hebrides." BOSWELL. "I ſhould wiſh to go and ſee ſome country totally different from what I have been uſed to; ſuch

as

as Turkey, where religion and every thing elſe are different." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; there are two objects of curioſity—the Chriſtian world and the Mahometan world. All the reſt may be conſidered as barbarous." BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, is the 'Turkiſh Spy' a genuine book?"—JOHNSON. "No, Sir. Mrs. Manley, in her Life, ſays, that her father wrote the two firſt volumes. And in another book, 'Dunton's Life and Errours,' we find that the reſt was written by one *Sault*, at two guineas a ſheet, under the direction of Dr. Midgely." 1783. Ætat. 74.

BOSWELL. "This has been a very factious reign, owing to the too great indulgence of government." JOHNSON. "*I* think ſo, Sir.—What at firſt was lenity, grew timidity. Yet this is reaſoning *à poſteriori*, and may not be juſt. Suppoſing a few had at firſt been puniſhed, I believe faction would have been cruſhed; but it might have been ſaid, that it was a ſanguinary reign. A man cannot tell *à priori* what will be beſt for Government to do. This reign has been very unfortunate. We have had an unſucceſsful war; but that does not prove that we have been ill governed. One ſide or other muſt prevail in war, as one or other muſt win at play.—When we beat Louis, we were not better governed; nor were the French better governed when Louis beat us."

On Saturday, April 12, I viſited him, in company with Mr. Windham, of Norfolk, whom, though a Whig, he highly valued. One of the beſt things he ever ſaid was to this gentleman; who, before he ſet out for Ireland as Secretary to Lord Northington, when Lord Lieutenant, expreſſed to the Sage ſome modeſt and virtuous doubts, whether he could bring himſelf to practiſe thoſe arts which it is ſuppoſed

1783. Ætat. 74. ed a perſon in that ſituation has occaſion to employ. "Don't be afraid, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon, with a pleaſant ſmile,) you will ſoon make a very pretty raſcal."

He talked to-day a good deal of the wonderful extent and variety of London, and obſerved, that men of curious enquiry might ſee in it ſuch modes of life as very few could even imagine. He in particular recommended to us to *explore Wapping*, which we reſolved to do, and certainly ſhall.

Mr. Lowe the painter, who was with him, was very much diſtreſſed that a large picture which he had painted was refuſed to be received into the exhibition of the Royal Academy. Mrs. Thrale knew Johnſon's character ſo ſuperficially, as to repreſent him as unwilling to do ſmall acts of benevolence; and mentions, in particular, that he would hardly take the trouble to write a letter in favour of his friends.—The truth, however, is, that he was remarkable, in an extraordinary degree, for what ſhe denies to him; and, above all, for this very ſort of kindneſs, writing letters for thoſe to whom his ſolicitations might be of ſervice. He now gave Mr. Lowe the following, of which I was diligent enough, with his permiſſion, to take copies at the next coffee-houſe, while Mr. Windham was ſo good as to ſtay by me.

To Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"SIR,

"MR. LOWE conſiders himſelf as cut off from all credit and all hope, by the rejection of his picture from the Exhibition. Upon this work he has exhauſted all his powers, and ſuſpended

pended all his expectations: and certainly, to be refuſed an opportunity of taking the opinion of the publick, is in itſelf a very great hardſhip. It is to be condemned without a trial. 1783. Ætat. 74.

"If you could procure the revocation of this incapacitating edict, you would deliver an unhappy man from great affliction. The Council has ſometimes reverſed its own determination; and I hope, that by your interpoſition this luckleſs picture may be got admitted. I am, &c.

"April 12, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mr. BARRY.

"SIR,

"MR. LOWE's excluſion from the Exhibition gives him more trouble than you and the other gentlemen of the Council could imagine or intend. He conſiders diſgrace and ruin as the inevitable conſequence of your determination.

"He ſays, that ſome pictures have been received after rejection; and if there be any ſuch precedent, I earneſtly intreat that you will uſe your intereſt in his favour. Of his work, I can ſay nothing: I pretend not to be a judge of painting; and this picture I never ſaw: but I conceive it extremely hard to ſhut out any man from the poſſibility of ſucceſs; and therefore I repeat my requeſt that you will propoſe the reconſideration of Mr. Lowe's caſe; and if there be any among the council with whom my name can have any weight, be pleaſed to communicate to them the deſire of, Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"April 12, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

Such

1783. Ætat. 74. Such interceſſion was too powerful to be reſiſted, and Mr. Lowe's performance was admitted at Somerſet-houſe. The ſubject, as I recollect, was the Deluge, at that point of time when the water was verging to the top of the laſt uncovered mountain. Near to the ſpot was ſeen the laſt of the antediluvian race, excluſive of thoſe who were ſaved in the ark of Noah.—This was one of thoſe giants, then the inhabitants of the earth, who had ſtill ſtrength to ſwim, and with one of his hands held aloft his infant child. Upon the remaining dry ſpot appeared a famiſhed lion, ready to ſpring at the child and devour it. Mr. Lowe told me that Johnſon ſaid to him, "Sir, your picture is noble and probable."—"A compliment, indeed (ſaid Mr. Lowe,) from a man who cannot lie, and cannot be miſtaken."

About this time he wrote to Mrs. Lucy Porter, mentioning his bad health, and that he intended a viſit to Lichfield. "It is (ſays he) with no great expectation of amendment that I make every year a journey into the country; but it is pleaſant to viſit thoſe whoſe kindneſs has been often experienced."

On April 18, (being Good-Friday,) I found him at breakfaſt in his uſual manner upon that day, drinking tea without milk, and eating a croſs-bun to prevent faintneſs; we went to St. Clement's church, as formerly. When we came home from church he placed himſelf on one of the ſtone ſeats at his garden-door, and I took the other, and thus in the open air and in a placid frame, he talked away very eaſily. JOHNSON. "Were I a country gentleman, I ſhould not be very hoſpitable, I ſhould not have crowds in my houſe." BOSWELL. "Sir Alexander Dick tells me, that he remembers having a thouſand people

people in a year to dine at his houſe; that is reckoning each perſon once each time that he dined there." JOHNSON. "That, Sir, is about three a day." BOSWELL. "How your ſtatement leſſens the idea." JOHNSON. "That, Sir, is the good of counting. It brings every thing to a certainty which before floated in the mind indefinitely." BOSWELL. "But *Omne ignotum pro magnifico eſt.* One is ſorry to have this diminiſhed." JOHNSON. "Sir, you ſhould not allow yourſelf to be delighted with errour." BOSWELL. "Three a day ſeem but few." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, he who entertains three a day does very liberally. And if there is a large family the poor entertain thoſe three, for they eat what the poor would get; there muſt be ſuperfluous meat; it muſt be given to the poor, or thrown out." BOSWELL. "I obſerve in London, that the poor go about and gather bones, which I underſtand are manufactured. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, they boil them, and extract a greaſe from them for greaſing wheels and other purpoſes. Of the beſt pieces they make a mock ivory, which is uſed for hafts to knives, and various other things. The coarſer pieces they burn and pound them, and ſell the aſhes."—BOSWELL. "For what purpoſe, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, for making a furnace for the chymiſts for melting iron. A paſte made of burnt bones will ſtand a ſtronger heat than any thing elſe. Conſider, Sir, if you are to melt iron, you cannot line your pot with braſs, becauſe it is ſofter than iron, and would melt ſooner; nor with iron, for though malleable iron is harder than caſt iron, yet it would not do; but a paſte of burnt bones will not melt."—BOSWELL. "Do you know, Sir, I have diſcovered a manufacture to a great extent, of what you

1785. Ætat. 74.

1783. Ætat. 74. you only piddle at—ſcraping and drying the peel of oranges. At a place in Newgate-ſtreet, there is a prodigious quantity done, which they ſell to the diſtillers." JOHNSON. "Sir, I believe they make a higher thing out of them than a ſpirit; they make what is called orange-butter, the oil of the orange inſpiſſated, which they mix perhaps with common pomatum, and make it fragrant. The oil does not fly off in the drying."

BOSWELL. "I wiſh to have a good walled garden." JOHNSON. "I don't think it would be worth the expence to you. We compute in England, a park-wall at a thouſand pounds a mile; now a garden-wall muſt coſt at leaſt as much. You intend your trees ſhould grow higher than a deer will leap. Now let us ſee—for a hundred pounds you could only have forty-four ſquare yards, which is very little; for two hundred pounds, you may have eighty-four ſquare yards, which is very well. But when will you get the value of two hundred pounds of walls in your climate? No, Sir, ſuch contention with nature is not worth while. I would plant an orchard, and have plenty of ſuch fruit as ripen well in your country. My friend, Dr. Madan, of Ireland, ſaid, that in an orchard there ſhould be enough to eat, enough to lay up, enough to be ſtolen, and enough to rot upon the ground. Cherries are an early fruit, you may have them; and you may have the early apples and pears." BOSWELL. "We cannot have nonpareils." JOHNSON. "Sir, you can no more have nonpareils than you can have grapes." BOSWELL. "We have them, Sir; but they are very bad." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, never try to have a thing merely to ſhew that you *cannot* have it. For ground that would let for forty ſhilling you may have

have a large orchard; and you ſee it coſts you only forty ſhillings. Nay, you may graze the ground when the trees are grown up, you cannot while they are young. BOSWELL. "Is not a good garden a very common thing in England, Sir?" "Not ſo common, Sir, as you imagine. In Lincolnſhire there is hardly an orchard; in Staffordſhire very little fruit." BOSWELL.—"Has Langton no orchard?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." BOSWELL. "How ſo, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, from the general negligence of the county. He has it not, becauſe nobody elſe has it." BOSWELL. "A hot-houſe is a pretty certain thing; I may have that." JOHNSON. "A hot-houſe is pretty certain; but you muſt firſt build it, then you muſt keep fires in it, and you muſt have a gardener to take care of it."—BOSWELL. "But if I have a gardener at any rate." JOHNSON. "Why, yes." BOSWELL. "I'd have it near my houſe—there is no need to have it in the orchard." JOHNSON. "Yes, I'd have it near my houſe—I would plant a great many currants; the fruit is good, and they make a pretty ſweetmeat."

1783. Ætat. 74.

I record this minute detail, which ſome may think trifling, in order to ſhew clearly how this great man, whoſe mind could graſp ſuch large and extenſive ſubjects as he has ſhewn in his literary labours, was yet well-informed in the common affairs of life, and loved to illuſtrate them.

Mr. Walker, the celebrated maſter of elocution came, and then we went up ſtairs into the ſtudy. I aſked him if he had taught many clergymen. JOHNSON. "I hope not." WALKER, I have taught only one, and he is the beſt reader I ever heard, not by my teaching, but by his own natural talents." JOHNSON. "Were

1783. Ætat. 74. he the beſt reader in the world, I would not have it told that he was taught." Here was one of his peculiar prejudices. Could it be any diſadvantage to the clergyman, to have it known that he was taught an eaſy and graceful delivery? BOSWELL. "Will you not allow, Sir, that a man may be taught to read well?" JOHNSON.—"Why, Sir, ſo far as to read better than he might do without being taught, yes. Formerly it was ſuppoſed that there was no difference in reading, but that one read as well as another." BOSWELL. "It is wonderful to ſee old Sheridan as enthuſiaſtick about oratory as ever." WALKER. "His enthuſiaſm as to what oratory will do may be too great. But he reads well." JOHNSON. "He reads well, but he reads low; and you know it is much eaſier to read low than to read high; for when you read high you are much more limited, your loudeſt note can be but one, and ſo in proportion to loudneſs. Now ſome people have occaſion to ſpeak to an extenſive audience, and muſt ſpeak loud to be heard." WALKER. "The art is to read ſtrong, though low."

Talking of the origin of language—JOHNSON. "It muſt have come by inſpiration. A thouſand, nay a million of children could not invent a language. While the organs are pliable, there is not underſtanding enough to form a language: by the time that there is underſtanding enough, the organs are become ſtiff. We know that after a certain age we cannot learn to pronounce a new language. No foreigner, who comes to England when advanced in life, ever pronounces Engliſh tolerably well; at leaſt ſuch inſtances are very rare. When I maintain that language muſt have come by inſpiration, I do not mean that inſpiration is required for rhetorick,

rick, and all the beauties of language; for when once man has language, we can conceive that he may gradually form modifications of it. I mean only, that inſpiration ſeems to me to be neceſſary to give man the faculty of ſpeech; to inform him that he may have ſpeech; which I think he could no more find out without inſpiration, than cows or hogs would think of ſuch a faculty." WALKER. "Do you think, Sir, that there are any perfect ſynonimes in any language." JOHNSON. "Originally there was not; but by uſing words negligently, or in poetry, one word comes to be confounded with another." 1783. Ætat. 74.

He talked of Dr. Dodd. "A friend of mine (ſaid he) came to me and told me, that a lady wiſhed to have Dodd's picture in a bracelet, and aſked me for a motto. I ſaid, I could think of no better than *Currat Lex*. I was very willing to have him pardoned, that is, to have the ſentence changed into tranſportation: but, when he was once hanged, I did not wiſh he ſhould be made a ſaint."

Mrs. Burney, wife of his friend Dr. Burney, came in, and he ſeemed to be entertained with her converſation.

Garrick's funeral was talked of as extravagantly expenſive. Johnſon, from his diſlike to exaggeration, would not allow that it was diſtinguiſhed by any extraordinary pomp. "Were there not ſix horſes in each coach?" ſaid Mrs. Burney. JOHNSON. "Madam, there were no more ſix horſes than ſix phœnixes."

Mrs. Burney wondered that ſome very beautiful new buildings ſhould be erected in Moorfields, in ſo ſhocking a ſituation as between Bedlam and St. Luke's Hoſpital; and ſaid ſhe could not live there. JOHNSON. "Nay, Madam, you ſee nothing there to hurt you. You

1783. Ætat. 74. no more think of madneſs by having windows that look to Bedlam, than you think of death by having windows that look to a church-yard." Mrs. Burney. "We may look to a church-yard, Sir; for it is right that we ſhould be kept in mind of death." Johnson. "Nay, Madam, if you go to that it is right that we ſhould be kept in mind of madneſs, which is occaſioned by too much indulgence of imagination. I think a very moral uſe may be made of theſe new buildings. I would have thoſe who have heated imaginations live there, and take warning." Mrs. Burney. "But, Sir, many of the poor people that are mad have become ſo from diſeaſe, or from diſtreſſing events. It is, therefore, not their faults, but their misfortune; and, therefore, to think of them, is a melancholy conſideration."

Time paſſed on in converſation till it was too late for the ſervice of the church at three o'clock. I took a walk, and left him alone for ſome time; then returned, and we had coffee and converſation again by ourſelves.

I ſtated the character of a noble friend of mine, as a curious caſe for his opinion:—"He is the moſt inexplicable man to me that I ever knew. Can you explain him, Sir? He is, I believe, noble-minded, generous, and princely. But his moſt intimate friends may be ſeparated from him for years, without his ever aſking a queſtion concerning them. He will meet them with a formality, a coldneſs, a ſtately indifference; but when they come cloſe to him, and fairly engage him in converſation, they find him as eaſy, pleaſant, and kind as they could wiſh. One then ſuppoſes that what is ſo agreeable will ſoon be renewed; but ſtay away from him for half a year, and he will neither call on you, nor ſend to inquire about you."

you."—JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I cannot aſcertain his character exactly, as I do not know him; but I ſhould not like to have ſuch a man for my friend. He may love ſtudy, and wiſh not to be interrupted by his friends; *Amici fures temporis*—.He may be a frivolous man, and be ſo much occupied with petty purſuits, that he may not want friends. Or he may have a notion that there is a dignity in appearing indifferent, while he in fact may not be more indifferent than another." 1783. Ætat. 74.

We went to evening prayers at St. Clement's, at ſeven, and then parted.

On Sunday, April 20, being Eaſter-day, after attending ſolemn ſervice at St. Paul's, I came to Dr. Johnſon, and found Mr. Lowe, the painter, ſitting with him. Mr. Lowe mentioned the great number of new buildings of late in London, yet that Dr. Johnſon had obſerved, that the number of inhabitants was not increaſed. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, the bills of mortality prove that no more people die now than formerly; ſo it is plain no more live. Births are nothing, for not one tenth of the people of London are born there." BOSWELL. "I believe, Sir, a great many of the children born in London die early." JOHNSON. "Why yes, Sir." BOSWELL. "But thoſe who do live are as ſtout and ſtrong people as any. Dr. Price ſays, they muſt be naturally ſtronger to get through."—JOHNSON. "That is ſyſtem, Sir. A great traveller obſerves, that it is ſaid there are no weak or deformed people among the Indians; but he with much ſagacity aſſigns the reaſon of this, which is, that the hardſhip of their life as hunters and fiſhers, does not allow weak or diſeaſed children to grow up. Now had I been an Indian I muſt have died early, my eyes would not

1783. Ætat. 74. not have ſerved me to get food. I indeed now could fiſh, give me Engliſh tackle; but had I been an Indian I muſt have ſtarved, or they would have knocked me on the head when they ſaw I could do nothing." BOSWELL. "Perhaps they would have taken care of you; we are told they are fond of oratory, you would have talked to them." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, I ſhould not have lived long enough to be fit to talk; I ſhould have been dead before I was ten years old. Depend upon it, Sir, a ſavage when he is hungry will not carry about with him a looby of nine years old, who cannot help himſelf. They have no affection, Sir." BOSWELL. "I believe natural affection of which we hear ſo much, is very ſmall." JOHNSON. "Sir, natural affection is nothing. But affection from principle and eſtabliſhed duty is ſometimes wonderfully ſtrong." LOWE. "A hen, Sir, will feed her chickens in preference to herſelf."—JOHNSON. "But we don't know that the hen is hungry; let the hen be fairly hungry, and I'll warrant ſhe'll peck the corn herſelf. A cock, I believe, will feed hens inſtead of himſelf, but we don't know that the cock is hungry." BOSWELL. "And that, Sir, is not from affection but gallantry. But ſome of the Indians have affection." JOHNSON. "Sir, that they help ſome of their children is plain; for ſome of them live which could not do without being helped."

I dined with him; the company were, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Deſmoulins, and Mr. Lowe.—He ſeemed not to be well, talked little, grew drowſy ſoon after dinner and retired, upon which I went away.

Having next day gone to Mr. Burke's ſeat in the country, from whence I was recalled by an expreſs,

expreſs, that a near relation of mine had killed his antagoniſt in a duel, and was himſelf dangerouſly wounded, I ſaw little of Dr. Johnſon till Monday, April 28, when I ſpent a conſiderable part of the day with him, and introduced the ſubject, which chiefly occupied my mind.—JOHNSON. "I do not ſee, Sir, that fighting is abſolutely forbidden in Scripture; I ſee revenge forbidden, but not ſelf-defence." BOSWELL. "The Quakers ſay it is; "Unto him that ſmitheth thee on one cheek, offer alſo the other." JOHNSON. "But ſtay, Sir, the text is meant only to have the effect of moderating paſſion; it is plain that we are not to take it in a literal ſenſe. We ſee this from the context, where there are other recommendations, which I warrant you the Quaker will not take literally, as for inſtance, 'From him that would borrow of thee, turn thou not away.' Let a man whoſe credit is bad come to a Quaker, and ſay, 'Well, Sir, lend me a hundred pounds;' he'll find him as unwilling as any other man. No, Sir, a man may ſhoot the man who invades his character, as he may ſhoot him who attempts to break into his houſe." So in 1745, my friend, Tom Cumming, the Quaker, ſaid, he would not fight, but he would drive an ammunition cart; and we know that the Quakers have ſent flannel waiſtcoats to our ſoldiers, to enable them to fight better. BOSWELL. "When a man is the aggreſſor, and by ill-uſage forces on a duel in which he is killed, have we not little ground to hope that he is gone into a ſtate of happineſs?" JOHNSON. "Sir, we are not to judge determinately of the ſtate in which a man leaves this life. He may in a moment have repented effectually, and it is poſſible may have been accepted by GOD. There is in 'Camden's Remains,' 1783. Ætat. 74.

1783. Ætat. 74. mains,' an epitaph upon a very wicked man, who was killed by a fall from his horſe, in which he is ſuppoſed to ſay,

'Between the ſtirrup and the ground,
'I mercy aſked, I mercy found."

BOSWELL. "Is not the expreſſion in the burial ſervice, 'In *ſure* and *certain* hope of a bleſſed reſurrection;' too ſtrong to be uſed indiſcriminately, and, indeed, ſometimes when thoſe over whoſe bodies it is ſaid have been notoriouſly profane?" JOHNSON. "It is ſure and certain *hope*, Sir; not *belief*." I did not inſiſt further; but cannot help thinking that leſs poſitive words would be more proper.

Talking of a man who was grown very fat, ſo as to be incommoded with corpulency; he ſaid, "He eats too much, Sir." BOSWELL.—"I don't know, Sir, you will ſee one man fat who eats moderately, and another man lean who eats a great deal." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, whatever may be the quantity that a man eats, it is plain, that if he is too fat, he has eaten more than he ſhould have done. One man may have a digeſtion that conſumes food better than common; but it is certain that ſolidity is encreaſed by putting ſomething to it." BOSWELL. "But may not ſolids ſwell and be diſtended?" JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, they may ſwell and be diſtended; but that is not fat."

We talked of the accuſation againſt a gentleman for ſuppoſed delinquencies in India. JOHNSON. "What foundation there is for accuſation I know not, but they will not get at him. Where bad actions are committed at ſo great a diſtance, a delinquent can obſcure the evidence till the ſcent becomes cold; there is a cloud between, which

which cannot be penetrated, therefore all diſtant power is bad. I am clear that the beſt plan for the government of India is a deſpotick governour; for if he be a good man it is evidently the beſt government; and ſuppoſing him to be a bad man, it is better to have one plunderer than many. A governour whoſe power is checked, lets others plunder that he himſelf may be allowed to plunder. But if deſpotick, he ſees that the more he lets others plunder the leſs there there will be for himſelf, ſo he reſtrains them; and though he himſelf plunders, the country is a gainer, compared with being plundered by numbers." 1783. Ætat. 74.

I mentioned the very liberal payment which had been received for reviewing; and, as evidence of this, that it has been proved in a trial that Dr. Shebbeare had received ſix guineas a ſheet for that kind of literary labour. JOHNSON. "Sir, he might get ſix guineas for a particular ſheet, but not *communibus ſheetibus*."—BOSWELL. "Pray, Sir, by a ſheet of review is it meant that it ſhall be all of the writer's own compoſition; or are extracts, made from the book reviewed, deducted?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir: it is a ſheet, no matter of what." BOSWELL.—"I think that is not reaſonable." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, it is. A man will more eaſily write a ſheet all his own than read an octavo volume to get extracts." To one of Johnſon's wonderful fertility of mind, I believe writing was really eaſier than reading and extracting; but with ordinary men the caſe is very different. A great deal, indeed, will depend upon the care and judgement with which the extracts are made.—I can ſuppoſe the operation to be tedious and difficult: but in many inſtances we muſt obſerve crude morſels cut out of books as if at random;

and

1783. Ætat. 74. and when a large extract is made from one place, it ſurely may be done with very little trouble. One, however, I muſt acknowledge, might be led, from the practice of Reviewers, to ſuppoſe that they take a pleaſure in original writing; for we often find that, inſtead of giving an accurate account of what has been done by the authour whoſe work they are reviewing, which is ſurely the proper buſineſs of a literary journal, they produce ſome plauſible and ingenious conceits of their own, upon topicks which have been diſcuſſed.

Upon being told that old Mr. Sheridan, indignant at the neglect of his oratorical plans, had threatened to go to America; JOHNSON. "I hope he will go to America." BOSWELL. "The Americans don't want oratory." JOHNSON.—"But we can want Sheridan."

On Monday, April 29, I found him at home in the forenoon, and Mr. Seward with him. Horace having been mentioned;—BOSWELL. "There is a great deal of thinking in his works. One finds there almoſt every thing but religion."—SEWARD. "He ſpeaks of his returning to it in his Ode *Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens*"—JOHNSON. "Sir, he was not in earneſt. This was merely poetical." BOSWELL. "There are, I am afraid, many people who have no religion at all." SEWARD. "And ſenſible people too." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, not ſenſible in that reſpect. There muſt be either a natural or a moral ſtupidity, if one lives in a total neglect of ſo very important a concern." SEWARD. "I wonder that there ſhould be people without religion." JOHNSON. "Sir, you need not wonder at this, when you conſider how large a proportion of almoſt every man's life is paſſed without thinking of it. I myſelf was for ſome years totally

totally regardleſs of religion. It had dropped out of my mind. It was at an early part of my life. Sickneſs brought it back, and I hope I have never loſt it ſince." BOSWELL. "My dear Sir, what a man you muſt have been without religion! Why you muſt have gone on drinking, and ſwearing, and—" JOHNSON.—(with a ſmile) "I drank enough, to be ſure."—SEWARD. "One ſhould think that ſickneſs, and the view of death, would make them more religious." JOHNSON. "Sir, they do not know how to go about it. They have not the firſt notion. A man who has never had religion before, no more grows religious when he is ſick, than a man who has never learnt figures can count when he has need of calculation." 1783. Ætat. 74.

I mentioned a worthy friend of ours whom he valued much, but obſerved that he was too ready to introduce religious diſcourſe upon all occaſions. JOHNSON. "Why yes, Sir, he will introduce religious diſcourſe without ſeeing whether it will end in inſtruction and improvement, or produce ſome profane jeſt. He would introduce it in the company of Wilkes, and twenty more ſuch."

I mentioned DR. Johnſon's excellent diſtinction between liberty of conſcience and liberty of teaching. JOHNSON. "Conſider, Sir; if you have children whom you wiſh to educate in the principles of the Church of England, and there comes a Quaker who tries to pervert them to his principles; you would drive away the Quaker. You would not truſt to the predomination of right, which you believe is in your opinions; you would keep wrong out of their heads. Now the vulgar are the children of the State. If any one attempts to teach them doctrines contrary to what the State approves,

1783. Ætat. 74. proves, the magiſtrate may and ought to reſtrain him." SEWARD. "Would you reſtrain private converſation, Sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, it is difficult to ſay where private converſation begins, and where it ends. If we three ſhould diſcuſs even the great queſtion concerning the exiſtence of a Supreme Being by ourſelves, we ſhould not be reſtrained; for that would be to put an end to all improvement. But if we ſhould diſcuſs it in the preſence of ten boarding-ſchool girls, and as many boys, I think the magiſtrate would do well to put us in the ſtocks, to finiſh the debate there."

Lord Hailes had ſent him a preſent of a curious little printed poem, on repairing the Univerſity of Aberdeen, by David *Malloch*, which he thought would pleaſe Johnſon, as affording clear evidence that Mallet had appeared even as a literary character by the name of *Malloch*; his changing which to one of ſofter ſound, had given Johnſon occaſion to introduce him into his Dictionary, under the article *Alias*. This piece was, I ſuppoſe, one of Mallet's firſt eſſays. It is preſerved in his works, with ſeveral variations. Johnſon now read aloud, from the beginning of it, where there were ſome common-place aſſertions as to the ſuperiority of ancient times. "How falſe is all this to ſay that in ancient times learning was not a diſgrace to a Peer as it is now. In ancient times a Peer was as ignorant as any one elſe. He would have been angry to have it thought he could write his name. Men in ancient times dared to ſtand forth with a degree of ignorance with which nobody would dare now to ſtand forth. I am always angry when I hear ancient times praiſed at the expence of modern times. There is now a great deal more learning in the world than there was formerly; for it

it is univerſally diffuſed. You have, perhaps, no man who knows as much Greek and Latin as Bentley; or no man who knows as much mathematicks as Newton: but you have many more men who know Greek and Latin, and who know mathematicks." 1783. Ætat. 74.

On Thurſday, May 1, I viſited him in the evening along with young Mr. Burke. He ſaid, "It is ſtrange that there ſhould be ſo little reading in the world, and ſo much writing. People in general do not willingly read, if they can have any thing elſe to amuſe them. There muſt be an external impulſe; emulation, or vanity, or avarice. The progreſs which the underſtanding makes through a book, has more pain than pleaſure in it. Language is ſcanty, and inadequate to expreſs the nice gradations and mixtures of our feelings. No man reads a book of ſcience from pure inclination. The books that we do read with pleaſure are light compoſitions, which contain a quick ſucceſſion of events. However, I have this year read all Virgil through. I read a book of the Eneid every night, ſo it was done in twelve nights, and I had great delight in it. The Georgicks did not give me much pleaſure, except the fourth book. The Eclogues I have almoſt all by heart. I do not think the ſtory of the Eneid intereſting. I like the ſtory of the Odyſſey much better; and this not on account of the wonderful things which it contains; for there are wonderful things enough in the Eneid; the ſhips of the Trojans turned into ſea-nymphs —the tree at Polydorus's tomb dropping blood. The ſtory of the Odyſſey is intereſting, as a great part of it is domeſtick. It has been ſaid, there is pleaſure in writing, particularly in writing verſes. I allow you may have pleaſure from writing after it is over, if you have written well;

1783. Ætat. 74. well; but you don't go willingly to it again. I know when I have been writing verſes, I have run my finger down the margin to ſee how many I had made, and how few I had to make."

He ſeemed to be in a very placid humour, and although I have no note of the particulars of young Mr. Burke's converſation, it is but juſtice to mention in general, that it was ſuch, that Dr. Johnſon ſaid to me afterwards, "He did very well indeed; I have a mind to tell his father."

I have no minute of any interview with Johnſon till Thurſday, May 15, when I find what follows:—BOSWELL. "I wiſh much to be in Parliament, Sir." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, unleſs you come reſolved to ſupport any adminiſtration, you would be the worſe for being in Parliament, becauſe you would be obliged to live more expenſively." BOSWELL. "Perhaps, Sir, I ſhould be the leſs happy for being in Parliament. I never would ſell my vote, and I ſhould be vexed if things went wrong." JOHNSON. "That's cant, Sir. It would not vex you more in the houſe, than in the gallery. Publick affairs vex no man." BOSWELL. "Have not they vexed yourſelf a little, Sir? Have not you been vexed by all the turbulence of this reign, and by that abſurd vote of the Houſe of Commons, 'That the influence of the Crown has increaſed, is increaſing, and ought to be diminiſhed?'" JOHNSON. "Sir, I have never ſlept an hour leſs, nor eat an ounce leſs meat. I would have knocked the factious dogs on the head, to be ſure; but I was not *vexed*." BOSWELL. "I declare, Sir, upon my honour, I did imagine I was vexed, and took a pride in it.—But it *was*, perhaps, cant; for I own I neither eat leſs nor ſlept leſs." JOHNSON. "My dear friend, clear your *mind* of cant. You may *talk* as

as other people do. You may ſay to a man, 1783.
'Sir, I am your moſt humble ſervant.' You Ætat. 74.
are *not* his moſt humble ſervant. You may ſay, 'Theſe are ſad times; it is a melancholy thing to be reſerved to ſuch times.' You don't mind the times. You tell a man, 'I am ſorry you had ſo much bad weather the laſt day of your journey, and were ſo much wet.' You don't care ſixpence whether he was wet or dry. You may *talk* in this manner; it is a mode of talking in ſociety: but don't *think* fooliſhly."

I talked of living in the country. JOHNSON. "Don't ſet up for what is called hoſpitality; it is a waſte of time, and a waſte of money; you are eat up, and not the more reſpected for your liberality. If your houſe be like an inn, nobody cares for you. A man who ſtays a week with another, makes him a ſlave for a week." BOSWELL. "But there are people, Sir, who make their houſes a home to their gueſts, and are themſelves quite eaſy." JOHNSON. "Then, Sir, home muſt be the ſame to the gueſts, and they need not come."

Here he diſcovered a notion common enough in perſons not much accuſtomed to entertain company; that there muſt be a degree of elaborate attention otherwiſe company will think themſelves neglected; and ſuch attention is no doubt very fatiguing. He proceeded, "I would not, however, be a ſtranger in my own county; I would viſit my neighbours, and receive their viſits; but I would not be in haſte to return viſits. If a gentleman comes to ſee me, I tell him he does me a great deal of honour. I do not go to ſee him perhaps for ten weeks, then we are very complaiſant to each other. No, Sir, you will have much more influence by giving or lending money, where it is wanted, than by hoſpitality."

On

1783. Ætat. 74. On Saturday May 17, I ſaw him for a ſhort time. Having mentioned that I had that morning been with old Mr. Sheridan, he remembered their former intimacy with a cordial warmth, and ſaid to me, "Tell Mr. Sheridan, I ſhall be glad to ſee him and ſhake hands with him." BOSWELL. "It is to me very wonderful that reſentment ſhould be kept up ſo long." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, it is not altogether reſentment that he does not viſit me; it is partly falling out of the habit—partly diſguſt, as one has at a drug that has made him ſick. Beſides, he knows that I laugh at his oratory."

Another day I ſpoke of one of our friends, of whom he, as well as I, had a very high opinion. He expatiated in his praiſe: but added, "Sir, he is a curſed Whig, a *bottomleſs* Whig, as they all are now."

I mentioned my expectations from the intereſt of an eminent perſon then in power; adding, "but I have no claim but the claim of friendſhip. However, ſome people will go a great way from that motive. JOHNSON. "Sir, they will go all the way from that motive." A gentleman talked of retiring, "Never think of that," ſaid Johnſon. The gentleman urged, "I ſhould then do no ill. JOHNSON. "Nor no good either. Sir, it would be a civil ſuicide."

On Monday, May 26, I found him at tea, and the celebrated Miſs Burney, the authour of "Evelina and Cecilia" with him. I aſked if there would be any ſpeakers in parliament, if there were no places to be obtained? JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir. Why do you ſpeak here? Either to inſtruct and entertain, which is a benevolent motive; or for diſtinction, which is a ſelfiſh motive." I mentioned "Cecilia." JOHNSON.

SON. (with an air of animated ſatisfaction) "Sir, if you talk of 'Cecilia,' talk on." 1783. Ætat. 74.

We talked of Mr. Barry's exhibition of his pictures. JOHNSON. "Whatever the hand may have done, the mind has done its part. There is a graſp of mind there which you find no where elſe*."

I aſked whether a man naturally virtuous, or one who has overcome wicked inclinations is the beſt. JOHNSON. "Sir, to *you*, the man who has overcome wicked inclinations is not the beſt. He has more merit to *himſelf*. I would rather truſt my money to a man who has no hands, and ſo a phyſical impoſſibility to ſteal, than to a man of the moſt honeſt principles. There is a witty ſatirical ſtory of Foote. He had a ſmall buſt of Garrick placed upon his bureau. 'You may be ſurpriſed (ſaid he) that I allow him to be ſo near my gold;—but you will obſerve he has no hands."

On Friday, May 29, being to ſet out for Scotland next morning, I paſſed a part of the day with him in more than uſual earneſtneſs; as his health was in a more precarious ſtate than at any time when I had parted from him. He however was quick and lively, and critical as uſual. I mentioned one who was a very learned man. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, he has a great deal of learning; but it never lies ſtraight. There is never one idea by the ſide of another; 'tis all entangled: and then he drives it ſo aukwardly upon converſation."

I ſtated to him an anxious thought, by which a ſincere Chriſtian might be diſturbed, even when conſcious of having lived a good life, ſo

* In Mr. Barry's printed analyſis, or deſcription of theſe pictures, he ſpeaks of Johnſon's character in the higheſt terms.

1783. Ætat. 74. far as is conſiſtent with human infirmity; he might fear that he ſhould afterwards fall away, and be guilty of ſuch crimes as would render all his former religion vain. Could there be, upon this aweful ſubject, ſuch a thing as balancing of accounts? Suppoſe a man who has led a good life for ſeven years, commits an act of wickedneſs, and inſtantly dies; will his former good life have any effect in his favour?" JOHNSON. "Sir, if a man has led a good life for ſeven years, and then is hurried by paſſion to do what is wrong, and is ſuddenly carried off, depend upon it he will have the reward of his ſeven years good life; GOD will not take a catch of him. Upon this principle Richard Baxter believes, that a ſuicide may be ſaved. 'If, (ſays he) it ſhould be objected that what I maintain may encourage ſuicide, I anſwer, I am not to tell a lie to prevent it." BOSWELL. "But does not the text ſay, 'As the tree falls, ſo it muſt lye?' JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; as the tree falls. But—(after a little pauſe)—that is meant as to the general ſtate of the tree, not what is the effect of a ſudden blaſt." In ſhort, he interpreted the expreſſion as referring to condition, not to poſition. The common notion, therefore, ſeems to be erroneous; and Shenſtone's witty remark on divines trying to give the tree a jerk upon a death-bed, to make it lye favourably, is not well founded.

I aſked him what works of Richard Baxter's I ſhould read. He ſaid, "Read any of them; they are all good."

He ſaid, "Get as much force of mind as you can. Live within your income. Always have ſomething ſaved at the end of the year. Let your imports be more than your exports, and you'll never go far wrong."

I aſ-

I assured him, that in the extensive and various range of his acquaintance there never had been any one who had a more sincere respect and affection for him than I had. He said, "I believe it, Sir. Were I in distress, there is no man to whom I should sooner come than to you. I should like to comeand have a cottage in your park, toddle about, live mostly on milk, and be taken care of by Mrs. Boswell. She and I are good friends now; are we not?" 1783. Ætat. 74.

Talking of devotion, he said, "Though it be true that 'God dwelleth not in temples made with hands,' yet in this state of being our minds are more piously affected in places appropriated to divine worship, than in others. Some people have a particular room in their house where they say their prayers, of which I do not disapprove, as it may animate their devotion."

He embraced me, and gave me his blessing, as usual when I was leaving him for any length of time. I walked from his door to day with a fearful apprehension of what might happen before I returned.

To the Right Hon. WILLIAM WINDHAM.

"SIR,

"THE bringer of this letter is the father of Miss Philips, a singer, who comes to try her voice on the stage at Dublin.

"Mr. Philips is one of my old friends; and I am of opinion that neither he nor his daughter will do any thing that can disgrace their benefactors, I take the liberty of entreating you to countenance and protect them so far as may be suitable to your station and character; and shall consider myself as obliged by any favourable notice which they shall have the honour of re-

1783. ceiving from you. I am, Sir, your moſt humble
Ætat. 74. ſervant,

"London, May 31, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

The following is another inſtance of his active benevolence:

To Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE ſent you ſome of my god-ſon's performances, of which I do not pretend to form any opinion. When I took the liberty of mentioning him to you, I did not know what I have ſince been told, that Mr. Moſer had admitted him among the ſtudents of the Academy. What more can be done for him I earneſtly entreat you to conſider; for I am very deſirous that he ſhould derive ſome advantage from my connection with him. If you are inclined to ſee him, I will bring him to wait on you at any time that you ſhall be pleaſed to appoint. I am, Sir, your moſt humble ſervant,

"June 2, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

My anxious apprehenſions at parting with him this year proved to be but too well-founded; for not long afterwards he had a dreadful ſtroke of the palſy, of which there are very full and accurate accounts in letters written by himſelf, which ſhew with what compoſure his ſteady piety enabled him to behave.

To Mr. EDMUND ALLEN.

"DEAR SIR,

"IT has pleaſed GOD this morning to deprive me of the powers of ſpeech; and as I do not

not know but that it may be his farther good pleaſure to deprive me ſoon of my ſenſes, I requeſt you will, on the receipt of this note, come to me, and act for me, as the exigencies of my caſe may require. I am ſincerely yours,

1783. Ætat. 74.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

To the Rev. Dr. JOHN TAYLOR.

"DEAR SIR,

"IT has pleaſed GOD, by a paralytick ſtroke in the night, to deprive me of ſpeech.

"I am very deſirous of Dr. Heberden's aſſiſtance, as I think my caſe is not paſt remedy. Let me ſee you as ſoon as it is poſſible. Bring Dr. Heberden with you if you can; but come yourſelf at all events. I am glad you are ſo well, when I am ſo dreadfully attacked.

"I think that by a ſpeedy application of ſtimulants much may be done. I queſtion if a vomit, vigorous and rough, would not rouze the organs of ſpeech to action. As it is too early to ſend, I will try to recollect what I can, that can be ſuſpected to have brought on this dreadful diſtreſs.

"I have been accuſtomed to bleed frequently for an aſthmatick complaint, but have forborne for ſome time by Dr. Pepy's perſuaſion, who perceived my legs beginning to ſwell. I ſometimes alleviate a painful, or more properly an oppreſſive conſtriction of my cheſt, by opiates; and have lately taken opium frequently, but the laſt, or two laſt times, in ſmaller quantities. My largeſt doſe is three grains, and laſt night I took but two. You will ſuggeſt theſe things (and they are all that I can call to mind) to Dr. Heberden. I am, &c.

"June 17, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

Two

1783. Ætat. 74. Two days after he wrote thus to Mrs. Thrale*:

"On Monday the 16th I ſat for my picture, and walked a conſiderable way with little inconvenience. In the afternoon and evening I felt myſelf light and eaſy, and began to plan ſchemes of life. Thus I went to bed, and in a ſhort time waked and ſat up, as has long been my cuſtom, when I felt a confuſion and indiſtinctneſs in my head, which laſted, I ſuppoſe, about half a minute. I was alarmed, and prayed God, that however he might afflict my body, he might ſpare my underſtanding. This prayer, that I might try the integrity of my faculties, I made in Latin verſe. The lines were not very good, but I knew them not to be very good: I made them eaſily, and concluded myſelf to be unimpaired in my faculties.

"Soon after I perceived that I had ſuffered a paralytick ſtroke, and that my ſpeech was taken from me. I had no pain, and ſo little dejection in this dreadful ſtate, that I wondered at my own apathy, and conſidered that perhaps death itſelf, when it ſhould come, would excite leſs horrour than ſeems now to attend it.

"In order to rouſe the vocal organs I took two drams. Wine has been celebrated for the production of eloquence. I put myſelf into violent motion, and I think repeated it; but all was vain. I then went to bed, and, ſtrange as it may ſeem, I think, ſlept. When I ſaw light, it was time to contrive what I ſhould do. Though God ſtopped my ſpeech, he left me my hand, I enjoyed a mercy which was not granted to my dear friend Lawrence, who now perhaps overlooks me as I am writing, and re-

* Vol. II. p. 268, of Mrs. Thrale's Collection.

joices

joices that I have what he wanted. My firſt note was neceſſarily to my ſervant, who came in talking, and could not immediately comprehend why he ſhould read what I put into his hands. 1783. Ætat. 74.

"I then wrote a card to Mr. Allen, that I might have a diſcreet friend at hand, to act as occaſion ſhould require. In penning this note, I had ſome difficulty; my hand, I knew not how or why, made wrong letters. I then wrote to Dr. Taylor to come to me, and bring Dr. Heberden; and I ſent to Dr. Brockleſby, who is my neighbour. My phyſicians are very friendly and give me great hopes; but you may imagine my ſituation. I have ſo far recovered my vocal powers, as to repeat the Lord's Prayer with no very imperfect articulation. My memory, I hope, yet remains as it was; but ſuch an attack produces ſolicitude for the ſafety of every faculty.

To Mr. THOMAS DAVIES.

"DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE had, indeed, a very heavy blow; but GOD, who yet ſpares my life, I humbly hope will ſpare my underſtanding, and reſtore my ſpeech. As I am not at all helpleſs, I want no particular aſſiſtance, but am ſtrongly affected by Mrs. Davies's tenderneſs; and when I think ſhe can do me good, ſhall be very glad to call upon her. I had ordered friends to be ſhut out, but one or two have found the way in; and if you come you ſhall be admitted: for I know not whom I can ſee that will bring more amuſement on his tongue, or more kindneſs in his heart. I am, &c.

"June 18, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

It

1783. Ætat. 74. It gives me great pleaſure to preſerve ſuch a memorial of Johnſon's regard for Mr. Davies, to whom I was indebted for my introduction to him*. He indeed loved Davies cordially, of which I ſhall give the following little evidence. One day, when he had treated him with too much aſperity, Tom, who was not without pride and ſpirit, went off in a paſſion; but he had hardly reached home, when Frank, who had been ſent after him, delivered this note:—"Come, come, dear Davies, I am always ſorry when we quarrel; ſend me word that we are friends."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"YOUR anxiety about my health is very friendly, and very agreeable with your general kindneſs. I have, indeed, had a very frightful blow. On the 17th of laſt month, about three in the morning, as near as I can gueſs, I perceived myſelf almoſt totally deprived of ſpeech. I had no pain. My organs were ſo obſtructed, that I could ſay *no*, but could ſcarcely ſay *yes*. I wrote the neceſſary directions, for it pleaſed GOD to ſpare my hand, and ſent for Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brockleſby. Between the time in which I diſcovered my own diſorder, and that in which I ſent for the doctors, I had, I believe, in ſpite of my ſurprize and ſolicitude, a little ſleep, and Nature began to renew its operations. They came, and gave the directions which the diſeaſe required, and from that time I have been

* Poor Derrick, however, though he did not himſelf introduce me to Dr. Johnſon as he promiſed, had the merit of introducing me to Davies, the immediate introductor.

continually

continually in articulation. I can now ſpeak, 1783.
but the nerves are weak, but I cannot continue Ætat. 74.
diſcourſe long; but ſtrength, I hope, will return. The phyſicians conſider me as cured. I was laſt Sunday at church. On Tueſday I took an airing to Hampſtead, and dined with the Club, where Lord Palmerſton was propoſed, and, againſt my opinion, was rejected*. I deſign to go next week with Mr. Langton to Rocheſter, where I propoſe to ſtay about ten days, and then try ſome other air. I have many kind invitations. Your brother has very frequently enquired after me. Moſt of my friends have, indeed, been very attentive. Thank dear Lord Hailes for his preſent.

"I hope you found at your return every thing gay and proſperous, and your lady, in particular, quite recovered and confirmed. Pay her my reſpects.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"London, July 3, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mrs. LUCY PORTER, *in Lichfield.*

"DEAR MADAM,

"THE account which you give of your health is but melancholy. May it pleaſe GOD to reſtore you. My diſeaſe affected my ſpeech, and ſtill continues, in ſome degree, to obſtruct my utterance; my voice is diſtinct enough for a while, but the organs being ſtill weak are quickly weary: but in other reſpects I am, I think, rather better than I have lately been; and can let you know my ſtate without the help of any other hand.

* His Lordſhip was ſoon after choſen, and is now a member of the Club.

"In

1783. Ætat. 74. "In the opinion of my friends, and in my own, I am gradually mending. The phyſicians conſider me as cured; and I had leave, four days ago, to waſh the cantharides from my head. Laſt Tueſday I dined at the Club.

"I am going next week into Kent, and purpoſe to change the air frequently this ſummer; whether I ſhall wander as far as Staffordſhire I cannot tell. I ſhould be glad to come. Return my thanks to Mrs. Cobb, and Mr. Pearſon, and all that have ſhewn attention to me.

"Let us, my dear, pray for one another, and conſider our ſufferings as notices mercifully given us to prepare ourſelves for another ſtate.

"I live now but in a melancholy way. My old friend Mr. Levett is dead, who lived with me in the houſe, and was uſeful and companionable; Mrs. Deſmoulins is gone away; and Mrs. Williams is ſo much decayed, that ſhe can add little to another's gratifications. The world paſſes away, and we are paſſing with it; but there is, doubtleſs, another world, which will endure for ever. Let us all fit ourſelves for it.

I am, &c.

"London, July 5, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

Such was the general vigour of his conſtitution, that he recovered from this alarming and ſevere attack with wonderful quickneſs; ſo that in July he was able to make a viſit to Mr. Langton at Rocheſter, where he paſſed about a fortnight, and made little excurſions as eaſily as at any time of his life. In Auguſt he went as far as the neighbourhood of Saliſbury, to Heale, the ſeat of William Bowles, Eſq. a gentleman whom I have heard him praiſe for exemplary religious order in his family. In his diary I find a ſhort but honourable mention of this viſit:—

"Auguſt

"Auguſt 28, I came to Heale without fatigue. 30. I am entertained quite to my mind." 1783. Ætat. 74.

To Dr. BROCKLESBY.

"DEAR SIR, Heale, near Saliſbury, Auguſt 29, 1783.

"WITHOUT appearing to want a juſt ſenſe of your kind attention, I cannot omit to give an account of the day which ſeemed to appear in ſome ſort perilous. I roſe at five, and went out at ſix, and having reached Saliſbury about nine, went forward a few miles in my friend's chariot. I was no more wearied with the journey, though it was a high hung rough coach, than I ſhould have been forty years ago. We ſhall now ſee what air will do. The country is all a plain; and the houſe in which I am, ſo far as I can judge from my window, for I write before I have left my chamber, is ſufficiently pleaſant.

"Be ſo kind as to continue your attention to Mrs. Williams; it is great conſolation to the well, and ſtill greater to the ſick, that they find themſelves not neglected; and I know that you will be deſirous of giving comfort even where you have no great hope of giving help.

"Since I wrote the former part of the letter, I find that by the courſe of the poſt I cannot ſend it before the thirty-firſt. I am, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

While he was here he had a letter from Dr. Brockleſby, acquainting him of the death of Mrs. Williams, which affected him a good deal. Though for ſeveral years her temper had not been complacent, ſhe had valuable qualities, and her departure left a blank in his houſe.

Upon

1783. Upon this occaſion he, according to his habi-
tual courſe of piety, compoſed a prayer*.
Ætat. 74. I ſhall here inſert a few particulars concerning him, with which I have been favoured by one of his friends.

"He had once conceived the deſign of writing the Life of Oliver Cromwell, ſaying, that he thought it muſt be highly curious to trace his extraordinary riſe to the ſupreme power, from ſo obſcure a beginning. He at length laid aſide his ſcheme, on diſcovering that all that can be told of him is already in print; and that it is impracticable to procure any authentick information in addition to what the world is already poſſeſſed of."

"He had likewiſe projected, but at what part of his life is not known, a work to ſhew how ſmall a quantity of REAL FICTION there is in the world; and how the ſame images, with very little variation, have ſerved all the authours who have ever written."

"His thoughts in the latter part of his life were frequently employed on his deceaſed friends. He often muttered theſe, or ſuch l k ſentences, 'Poor man! and then he died."

"Speaking of a certain literary friend, 'He is a very pompous puzzling fellow, (ſays the Doctor;) he ſent me a letter once that ſomebody had written to him, no matter what it was about; but he wanted to have the letter back, and expreſſed a mighty value for it, he hoped it was to be met with again, he would not loſe it for a thouſand pounds. I layed my hand upon it ſoon afterwards, and gave it him. I believe I ſaid, I was very glad to have met with it. O then he did not know that it ſignified any thing. So you ſee, when the letter was loſt it

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 226.

was

was worth a thouſand pounds, and when it was found it was not worth a farthing." 1783. Ætat. 74

"The ſtyle and character of his converſation is pretty generally known; it was certainly conducted in conformity with a precept of Lord Bacon, but it is not clear, I apprehend, that this conformity was either perceived or intended by Johnſon. The precept alluded to is as follows: 'In all kinds of ſpeech, either pleaſant, grave, ſevere or ordinary, it is convenient to ſpeak leiſurely, and rather drawingly than haſtily: becauſe haſty ſpeech confounds the memory, and oftentimes, beſides the unſeemlineſs, drives a man either to ſtammering, a non-plus, or harping on that which ſhould follow; whereas a ſlow ſpeech confirmeth the memory, addeth a conceit of wiſdom to the hearers, beſides a ſeemlineſs of ſpeech and countenance.' Dr. Johnſon's method of converſation was certainly calculated to excite attention, and to amuſe or inſtruct, (as it happened) without wearying or confuſing his company. He was always moſt perfectly clear and conſpicuous; and his language was ſo accurate, and his ſentences ſo neatly conſtructed, that his converſation might have been all printed without any correction. At the ſame time, it was eaſy and natural; the accuracy of it had no appearance of labour, conſtraint, or ſtiffneſs; he ſeemed more correct than others by the force of habit, and the cuſtomary exerciſes of his powerful mind."

"He ſpoke often in praiſe of French literature. 'The French are excellent in this, (he would ſay,) they have a book on every ſubject.' From what he had ſeen of them he denied them the praiſe of ſuperiour politeneſs, and mentioned, with very viſible diſguſt, the cuſtom they have of ſpitting on the floors of their apartment. 'This (ſays the Doctor) is as groſs a thing as can well

1783. Ætat. 74. well be done; and one wonders how any man, or ſet of men, can perſiſt in ſo offenſive a practice for a whole day together; one ſhould expect that the firſt effort towards civilization would remove it even amongſt ſavages."

"Baxter's 'Reaſons of the Chriſtian Religion,' he thought contained the beſt collection of the evidences of the divinity of the Chriſtian ſyſtem."

"Chymiſtry was always an intereſting purſuit with Dr. Johnſon. Whilſt he was in Wiltſhire, he attended ſome experiments that were made by a phyſician at Saliſbury, on the new kinds of air. In the courſe of the experiments frequent mention being made of Dr. Prieſtley, Dr. Johnſon knit his brows, and in a ſtern manner enquired, 'Why do we hear ſo much of Dr. Prieſtley*?' He was very properly anſwered, 'Sir, becauſe we are indebted to him for

*I do not wonder at Johnſon's diſpleaſure when the name of Dr. Prieſtley was mentioned; for I know no writer who has been ſuffered to publiſh more pernicious doctrines. I ſhall inſtance only three. Firſt, *materialiſm*; by which *mind* is denied to human nature, which, if believed, muſt deprive us of every elevated principle. Secondly, *neceſſity*; or the doctrine that every action, whether good or bad, is included in an unchangeable and unavoidable ſyſtem; a notion utterly ſubverſive of moral government. Thirdly, that we have no reaſon to think that the *future* world, (which, as he is pleaſed to *inform* us, will be adapted to our merely improved nature,) will be materially different from *this*; which, if believed, would ſink wretched mortals into deſpair, as they could no longer hope for the "reſt that remaineth for the people of GOD," or for that happineſs which is revealed to us as ſomething beyond our preſent conceptions; but would feel themſelves doomed to a continuation of the uneaſy ſtate under which they now groan. I ſay nothing of the petulent intemperance with which he dares to inſult the venerable eſtabliſhments of his country.

theſe

theſe important diſcoveries.' On this Dr. Johnſon appeared well content; and replied, 'Well, well, I believe we are; and let every man have the honour he has merited." 1783. Ætat. 74.

"A friend was one day, about two years before his death, ſtruck with ſome inſtance of Dr. Johnſon's great candour. 'Well, Sir, (ſaid he,) I will always ſay that you are a very candid man. 'Will you (replied the Doctor) I doubt then you will be very ſingular. But, indeed, Sir, (continued he,) I look upon myſelf to be a man very much miſunderſtood. I am not an uncandid, nor am I a ſevere man. I ſometimes ſay more than I mean in jeſt, and people are apt to believe me ſerious: however, I am more candid than I was when I was younger. As I know more of mankind I expect leſs of them, and am ready now to call a man *a good man*, upon eaſier terms than I was formerly."

On his return from Heale he wrote to Dr. Burney. "I came home on the 18th at noon to a very diſconſolate houſe. You and I have loſt our friends, but you have more friends at home. My domeſtick companion is taken from me. She is much miſſed, for her acquiſitions were many, and her curioſity univerſal; ſo that ſhe partook of every converſation. I am not well enough to go much out; and to ſit, and eat, or faſt alone, is very weariſome. I always mean to ſend my compliments to all the ladies."

His fortitude and patience met with ſevere trials during this year. The ſtroke of the palſy has been related circumſtantially; but he was alſo afflicted with the gout, and was beſides troubled with a complaint which not only was attended with immediate inconvenience, but threatened him with a painful chirurgical operation, from which moſt men would ſhrink. The

1733. Ætat. 74. The complaint was a *ſarcocele*, which Johnſon bore with uncommon firmneſs, and was not at all frightened while he looked forward to amputation. He was attended by Mr. Pott and alſo Mr. Cruikſhank. I have before me a letter of the 30th of July this year, to Mr. Cruikſhank, in which he ſays, "I am going to put myſelf into your hands," and another, accompanying a ſet of his "Lives of the Poets," in which he ſays, "I beg your acceptance of theſe volumes, as an acknowledgement of the great favours which you have beſtowed on, Sir, your moſt obliged and moſt humble ſervant." I have in my poſſeſſion ſeveral more letters from him to Mr. Cruikſhank, and alſo to Dr. Mudge at Plymouth, which it would be improper to inſert, as they are filled with unpleaſing technical details. I ſhall, however, extract from his letters to Dr. Mudge ſuch paſſages as ſhew either a felicity of expreſſion, or the undaunted ſtate of his mind.

"My conviction of your ſkill, and my belief of your friendſhip, determine me to intreat your opinion and advice."—"In this ſtate I with great earneſtneſs deſire you to tell me what is to be done. Exciſion is doubtleſs neceſſary to the cure, and I know not any means of palliation. The operation is doubtleſs painful; but is it dangerous? The pain I hope to endure with decency; but I am loth to put life into much hazard."—"By repreſenting the gout as an antagoniſt to the palſy, you have ſaid enough to make it welcome. This is not ſtrictly the firſt fit, but I hope it is as good as the firſt; for it is the ſecond that ever confined me; and the firſt was ten years ago, much leſs fierce and fiery than this."—"Write, dear Sir, what you can, to inform or encourage me. The operation is not delayed by any fears or objections of mine."

Happily

Happily the complaint abated without his being put to the torture of amputation. But we muſt ſurely admire the manly reſolution which he diſcovered while it hung over him. 1783. Ætat. 74.

To BENNET LANGTON, *Eſq.*

" DEAR SIR,

" YOU may very reaſonably charge me with inſenſibility of your kindneſs, and that of Lady Rothes, ſince I have ſuffered ſo much time to paſs without paying any acknowledgement. I now, at laſt, return my thanks; and why I did it not ſooner I ought to tell you. I went into Wiltſhire as ſoon as I well could, and was there much employed in palliating my own malady. Diſeaſe produces much ſelfiſhneſs. A man in pain is looking after eaſe; and lets moſt other things go as chance ſhall diſpoſe of them. In the mean time I have loſt a companion, to whom I have had recourſe for domeſtick amuſement for thirty years, and whoſe variety of knowledge never was exhauſted; and now return to a habitation vacant and deſolate. I carry about a very troubleſome and dangerous complaint, which admits no cure but by the chirurgical knife. Let me have your prayers. I am, &c.

" London, Sept. 29, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

In his next letter to the ſame gentleman he writes, " The gout has within theſe four days come upon me with a violence which I never experienced before. It made me helpleſs as an infant."—And in the following, having mentioned Mrs. Williams, ſays, " Whoſe death following that of Levett, has now made my houſe a ſolitude. She left her little ſubſtance to

1783. Ætat. 74. a charity-ſchool. She is, I hope, where there is neither darkneſs, nor want, nor ſorrow."

I wrote to him, begging to know the ſtate of his health, and mentioned that "Baxter's Anacreon, which is in the library at Auchinleck, was, I find, collated by my father in 1727, with the M. S. belonging to the Univerſity of Leyden, and he has made a number of notes upon it. Would you adviſe me to publiſh a new edition of it?"

His anſwer was dated September 30.—"You ſhould not make your letters ſuch rarities, when you know, or might know, the uniform ſtate of my health. It is very long ſince I heard from you; and that I have not anſwered is a very inſufficient reaſon for the ſilence of a friend.—Your Anacreon is a very uncommon book; neither London nor Cambridge can ſupply a copy of that edition. Whether it ſhould be reprinted, you cannot do better than conſult Lord Hailes. Beſides my conſtant and radical diſeaſe, I have been for theſe ten days much haraſſed with the gout, but that has now remitted. I hope God will yet grant me a little longer life, and make me leſs unfit to appear before him."

He this autumn received a viſit from the celebrated Mrs. Siddons. He gives this account of it in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale:—"Mrs. Siddons, in her viſit to me, behaved with great modeſty and propriety, and left nothing behind her to be cenſured or deſpiſed. Neither praiſe nor money, the two powerful corrupters of mankind, ſeem to have depraved her. I ſhall be glad to ſee her again. Her brother Kemble calls on me, and pleaſes me very well. Mrs. Siddons and I talked of plays; and ſhe told me her intention of exhibiting this winter the characters of Conſtance, Catherine, and Iſabella, in Shakſpeare."

Mr.

Mr. Kemble has favoured me with the following minute of what paſſed at this viſit. 1783. Ætat. 74.

"When Mrs. Siddons came into the room, there happened to be no chair ready for her, which he obſerving, ſaid with a ſmile, 'Madam, you who ſo often occaſion a want of ſeats to other people, will the more eaſily excuſe the want of one yourſelf.'

"Having placed himſelf by her, he with great good humour entered upon a conſideration of the Engliſh drama; and, among other enquiries, particularly aſked her which of Shakſpeare's characters ſhe was moſt pleaſed with. Upon her anſwering that ſhe thought the character of Queen Catherine in Henry the Eighth, the moſt natural. 'I think ſo too, Madam, (ſaid he;) and whenever you perform it I will once more hobble out to the theatre myſelf.' Mrs. Siddons promiſed ſhe would do herſelf the honour of acting his favourite part for him; but many circumſtances happened to prevent the repreſentation of King Henry the Eighth during the Doctor's life.

"In the courſe of the evening he thus gave his opinion upon the merits of ſome of the principal performers whom he remembered to have ſeen upon the ſtage. 'Mrs. Porter, in the vehemence of rage, and Mrs. Clive in the ſprightlineſs of humour, I have never ſeen equalled. What Clive did beſt, ſhe did better than Garrick; but could not do half ſo many things well; ſhe was a better romp than I ever ſaw in nature. Pritchard, in common life, was a vulgar ideot; ſhe would talk of her *gownd*: but, when ſhe appeared on the ſtage, ſeemed to be inſpired by gentility and underſtanding. I once talked with Colley Cibber, and thought him ignorant of the principles of his art. Garrick,

1783. Ætat. 74. Madam, was no declaimer; there was not one of his own ſcene-ſhifters who could not have ſpoken *To be, or not to be*, better than he did: yet he was the only actor I ever ſaw whom I could call a maſter both in tragedy and comedy; though I liked him beſt in comedy. A true conception of character, and natural expreſſion of it were his diſtinguiſhing excellencies.' Having expatiated, with his uſual force and eloquence, on Mr. Garrick's extraordinary eminence as an actor, he concluded with this compliment to his ſocial talents: 'And after all, Madam, I thought him leſs to be envied on the ſtage than at the head of a table."

Johnſon, indeed, had thought more upon the ſubject of acting than might be generally ſuppoſed. Talking of it one day to Mr. Kemble, he ſaid, "Are you, Sir, one of thoſe enthuſiaſts who believe yourſelf transformed into the very character you repreſent." Upon Mr. Kemble's anſwering that he had never felt ſo ſtrong a perſuaſion himſelf; "To be ſure not, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon). The thing is impoſſible. And if Garrick really believed himſelf to be that monſter Richard the Third, he deſerved to be hanged every time he performed it."

A pleaſing inſtance of the generous attention of one of his friends has been diſcovered by the publication of Mrs. Thrale's collection of Letters. In a letter to one of the Miſs Thrales, he writes, "A friend, whoſe name I will tell when your mamma has tried to gueſs it, ſent to my phyſician to enquire whether this long train of illneſs had brought me into difficulties for want of money, with an invitation to ſend to him for what occaſion required. I ſhall write this night to thank him, having no need to borrow. And afterwards, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale,

Thrale, "Since you cannot gueſs, I will tell you, that the generous man was Gerard Hamilton. I returned him a very thankful and reſpectful letter." 1783. Ætat. 74.

I applied to Mr. Hamilton, by a common friend, and he has been ſo obliging as to let me have Johnſon's letter to him upon this occaſion, to adorn my collection.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM GERARD HAMILTON.

"DEAR SIR,

"YOUR kind enquiries after my affairs, and your generous offers have been communicated to me by Dr. Brocklesby. I return thanks with great ſincerity, having lived long enough to know what gratitude is due to ſuch friendſhip; and entreat that my refuſal may not be imputed to ſullenneſs or pride. I am indeed, in no want. Sickneſs is, by the generoſity of my phyſicians, of little expence to me. But if any unexpected exigence ſhould preſs me, you ſhall ſee, dear Sir, how cheerfully I can be obliged to ſo much liberality. I am, Sir, your moſt obedient and moſt humble ſervant,

"Nov. 19, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

I find in this, as in former years, notices of his kind attention to Mrs. Gardiner, who, though in the humble ſtation of a tallow-chandler upon Snow-hill, was a woman of excellent good ſenſe, pious, and charitable. She told me, ſhe had been introduced to him by Mrs. Maſters the poeteſs, whoſe volumes he reviſed, and it is ſaid, illuminated here and there with a ray of his own genius. Mrs. Gardiner was very zealous for the ſupport of a Welch charity ſchool;

1783. Ætat. 74. ſchool; and Johnſon, this year, obtained for it a ſermon from the late Biſhop of St. Aſaph, Dr. Shipley, whom he, in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, characteriſes as "knowing and converſible;" and whom all knew his Lordſhip, even thoſe who differed from him in politicks, remember with much reſpect.

The Earl of Carliſle having written a tragedy entitled "*The Father's Revenge*," ſome of his Lordſhip's friends applied to Mrs. Chapone, to prevail on Dr. Johnſon to read and give his opinion of it, which he accordingly did, in a letter to that lady. Sir Joſhua Reynolds having informed me that this letter was in Lord Carliſle's poſſeſſion, though not fortunate enough to have the honour of being known to his Lordſhip, truſting to the general courteſy of literature, I wrote to him, requeſting the favour of a copy of it, and to be permitted to inſert it in my life of Dr. Johnſon. His Lordſhip was ſo good as to comply with my requeſt, and has thus enabled me to enrich my work with a very fine piece of writing, which diſplays at once the critical ſkill and politeneſs of my illuſtrious friend; and perhaps the curioſity which it will excite, may induce the noble and elegant authour to gratify the world by the publication* of a performance, of which Dr. Johnſon has ſpoken in ſuch terms.

To Mrs. CHAPONE.

"MADAM,

"By ſending the tragedy to me a ſecond time†, I think that a very honourable diſtinc-

* A few copies only of this tragedy have been printed, and given to the authour's friends.

† Dr. Johnſon, having been very ill when the tragedy was firſt ſent to him, had declined the conſideration of it.

tion

tion has been ſhewn me, and I did not delay the peruſal, of which I am now to tell the effect. 1783. Ætat. 74.

"The conſtruction of the play is not completely regular; the ſtage is too often vacant, and the ſcenes are not ſufficiently connected. This, however, would be called by Dryden only a mechanical defect; which takes away little from the power of the poem, and which is ſeen rather than felt.

"A rigid examiner of the diction might perhaps, wiſh ſome words changed, and ſome lines more vigorouſly terminated. But from ſuch petty imperfections what writer ever was free?

"The general form and force of the dialogue is of more importance. It ſeems to want that quickneſs of reciprocation which characteriſes the Engliſh drama, and is not always ſufficiently fervid or animated.

"Of the ſentiments, I remember not one that I wiſhed omitted. In the imagery I cannot forbear to diſtinguiſh the compariſon of joy ſucceeding grief to light ruſhing on the eye accuſtomed to darkneſs. It ſeems to have all that can be deſired to make it pleaſe. It is new, juſt, and delightful*.

"With the characters, either as conceived or preſerved, I have no fault to find; but was much inclined to congratulate a writer, who, in defiance of prejudice and faſhion, made the Archbiſhop a good man, and ſcorned all

* "I could have borne my woes; that ſtranger Joy
'Wounds while it ſmiles:—The long impriſoned wretch,
Emerging from the night of his damp cell,
'Shrinks from the ſun's bright beams; and that which flings
"Gladneſs o'er all, to him is agony."

thought-

1783. Ætat. 74. thoughtleſs applauſe, which a vicious churchman would have brought him.

"The cataſtrophe is affecting. The Father and Daughter both culpable, both wretched, and both penitent, divide between them our pity and our ſorrow.

"Thus, Madam, I have performed what I did not willingly undertake, and could not decently refuſe. The noble writer will be pleaſed to remember, that ſincere criticiſm ought to raiſe no reſentment, becauſe judgement is not under the controul of will; but involuntary criticiſm, as it has ſtill leſs of choice, ought to be more remote from poſſibility of offence.

I am, &c.

"Nov. 18, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

I conſulted him on two queſtions, of a very different nature: one, whether the unconſtitutional influence exerciſed by the Peers of Scotland in the election of the repreſentatives of the Commons, by means of fictitious qualifications, ought not to be reſiſted?—the other, What in propriety and humanity, ſhould be done with old horſes unable to labour? I gave him ſome account of my life at Auchinleck; and expreſſed my ſatisfaction that the gentlemen of the county had, at two publick meetings, elected me their *Præſes*, or Chairman.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"LIKE all other men who have great friends, you begin to feel the pangs of neglected merit, and all the comfort that I can give you is, by telling you that you have probably more pangs to feel, and more neglect to ſuffer. You have,

have, indeed, begun to complain too ſoon; and I hope I am the only confidant of your diſcontent. Your friends have not yet had leiſure to gratify perſonal kindneſs; they have hitherto been buſy in ſtrengthening their miniſterial intereſt. If a vacancy happens in Scotland, give them early intelligence; and as you can ſerve Government as powerfully as any of your probable competitors, you may make in ſome ſort a warrantable claim. 1783. Ætat. 74.

"Of the exaltations and depreſſions of your mind you delight to talk, and I hate to hear. Drive all ſuch fancies from you.

"On the day when I received your letter, I think the foregoing page was written; to which, one diſeaſe or another has hindered me from making any additions. I am now a little better. But ſickneſs and ſolitude preſs me very heavily. I could bear ſickneſs better, if I were relieved from ſolitude.

"The preſent dreadful confuſion of the publick ought to make you wrap yourſelf up in your hereditary poſſeſſions, which though leſs than you may wiſh, are more than you can want; and in an hour of religious retirement return thanks to God, who has exempted you from any ſtrong temptation to faction, treachery, plunder, and diſloyalty.

"As your neighbours diſtinguiſh you by ſuch honours as they can beſtow, content yourſelf with your ſtation, without neglecting your profeſſion. Your eſtate and the Courts will find you full employment; and your mind well occupied will be quiet.

"The uſurpation of the nobility, for they apparently uſurp all the influence they gain by fraud and miſrepreſentation, I think it certainly lawful, perhaps your duty to reſiſt. What is not their own they have only by robbery.

"Your

1783. Ætat. 74. "Your queſtion about the horſes gives me more perplexity. I know not well what advice to give you. I can only recommend a rule which you do not want—give as little pain as you can. I ſuppoſe that we have a right to their ſervice while their ſtrength laſts; what we can do with them afterwards I cannot ſo eaſily determine. But let us conſider. Nobody denies that man has a right firſt to milk the cow, and to ſheer the ſheep, and then to kill them for his table. May he not, by parity of reaſon, firſt work a horſe, and then kill him the eaſieſt way, that he may have the means of another horſe, or food for cows and ſheep? Man is influenced in both caſes by different motives of ſelf-intereſt. He that rejects the one muſt reject the other.

"I am, &c.

"London, Dec. 24, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON.

"A happy and pious Chriſtmas; and many happy years to you, your lady, and children."

The late ingenious Mr. Mickle, ſome time before his death, wrote me a letter concerning Dr. Johnſon, in which he mentions, "I was upwards of twelve years acquainted with him, was frequently in his company, always talked with eaſe to him, and can truly ſay, that I never received from him one rough word."

In this letter he relates his having, while engaged in tranſlating the Luſiad, had a diſpute of conſiderable length with Johnſon, who, as, uſual declaimed upon the miſery and corruption of a ſea-life, and uſed this expreſſion:—"It had been happy for the world, Sir, if your hero, Gama, Prince Henry of Portugal, and Columbus, had never been born, or that their ſchemes had never gone farther than their own imagina-

imaginations."—"This ſentiment, (ſays Mr. Mickle,) which is to be found in his 'Introduction to the World Diſplayed,' I, in my diſſertation prefixed to the Luſiad, have controverted; and though authours are ſaid to be bad judges of their own works, I am not aſhamed to own to a friend, that that diſſertation is my favourite above all that I ever attempted in proſe. Next year, when the Luſiad was publiſhed, I waited on Dr. Johnſon, who addreſſed me with one of his good-humoured ſmiles:—'Well, you have remembered our diſpute about Prince Henry, and have cited me too. You have done your part very well indeed; you have made the beſt of your argument: but I am not convinced yet.' 1783. Ætat. 74.

"Before publiſhing the Luſiad, I ſent Mr. Hoole a proof of that part of the introduction, in which I make mention of Dr. Johnſon, yourſelf, and other well-wiſhers to the work, begging it might be ſhewn to Dr. Johnſon. This was accordingly done; and in the place of the ſimple mention of him which I had made, he dictated to Mr. Hoole the ſentence as it now ſtands.

"Dr. Johnſon told me in 1772, that before that time, he himſelf had a deſign to tranſlate the Luſiad, of the merit of which he ſpoke highly, but had been prevented by a number of other engagements."

Mr. Mickle reminds me in this letter of a converſation, when dining one day at Mr. Hoole's with Dr. Johnſon, when Mr. Nicol, the King's bookſeller, and I attempted to controvert the maxim, "Better that ten guilty ſhould eſcape, than one innocent perſon ſhould ſuffer;" and were anſwered by Dr. Johnſon with great power of reaſoning and eloquence. I am very

ſorry

1783. Ætat. 74. ſorry that I have no record of that day; but I well recollect my illuſtrious friend's having ably ſhewn, that unleſs civil inſtitutions inſure protection to the innocent, all the confidence which mankind would have in them would be loſt.

I ſhall here mention what ſhould properly have appeared in my account of laſt year, though the controverſy was not cloſed till this. The Reverend Mr. Shaw, a native of one of the Hebrides, having entertained doubts of the authenticity of the poems aſcribed to Oſſian, diveſted himſelf of national bigotry; and having travelled in the Highlands and Iſlands of Scotland, and alſo in Ireland, in order to furniſh himſelf with materials for a Gaelick Dictionary, which he afterwards compiled, was ſo fully ſatisfied that Dr. Johnſon was in the right upon the queſtion, that he fairly publiſhed a pamphlet, ſtating his conviction, and the proofs and reaſons on which it was founded. A perſon at Edinburgh, of the name of Clark, anſwered this pamphlet with much zeal and abuſe of its authour. Johnſon took Mr. Shaw under his protection, and gave him his aſſiſtance in writing a reply, which has been admired by the beſt judges, and by many been conſidered as concluſive. A few paragraphs, which ſufficiently mark their great authour, ſhall be ſelected.

"My aſſertions are, for the moſt part, purely negative: I deny the exiſtence of Fingal, becauſe in a long and curious peregrination through the Gaelick regions I have never been able to find it. What I could not ſee myſelf I ſuſpect to be equally inviſible to others; and I ſuſpect with the more reaſon, as among all thoſe who have ſeen it no man can ſhew it.

"Mr. Clark compares the obſtinacy of thoſe who diſbelieve the genuineneſs of Oſſian to a blind man,

man, who ſhould diſpute the reality of colours, and deny that the Britiſh troops were clothed in red. The blind man's doubt would be rational, if he did not know by experience that others have a power which he himſelf wants; but what perſpicacity has Mr. Clark which Nature has withheld from me or the reſt of mankind? 1783. Ætat. 74.

"The true ſtate of the parallel muſt be this. Suppoſe a man, with eyes like his neighbours, was told by a boaſting corporal, that the troops, indeed, wore red clothes for their ordinary dreſs, but that every ſoldier had likewiſe a ſuit of black velvet, which he put on when the King reviews them. This he thinks ſtrange, and deſires to ſee the fine clothes, but finds nobody in forty thouſand men that can produce either coat or waiſtcoat. One, indeed, has left them in his cheſt at Port Mahon; another has always heard that he ought to have velvet clothes ſomewhere; and a third has heard ſomebody ſay, that ſoldiers ought to wear velvet. Can the enquirer be blamed if he goes away believing that a ſoldier's red coat is all that he has?

"But the moſt obdurate incredulity may be ſhamed or ſilenced by facts. To overpower contradictions, let the ſoldier ſhew his velvet coat, and the Fingaliſt the original of Oſſian.

"The difference between us and the blind man is this:—the blind man is unconvinced, becauſe he cannot ſee; and we, becauſe though we can ſee, we find nothing that can be ſhown."

Notwithſtanding the complication of diſorders under which Johnſon now laboured, he did not reſign himſelf to deſpondency and diſcontent, but with wiſdom and ſpirit endeavoured

1783. Ætat. 74. ed to conſole and amuſe his mind with as many innocent enjoyments as he could procure. Sir John Hawkins has mentioned the cordiality with which he inſiſted that ſuch of the members of the old club in Ivy-lane as ſurvived ſhould meet again and dine together, which they did, twice at a tavern, and once at his houſe: and in order to inſure himſelf ſociety in the evening for three days in the week, he inſtituted a Club at the Eſſex-Head, in Eſſex-ſtreet, then kept by by Samuel Greaves, an old ſervant of Mr. Thrale's.

To Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"DEAR SIR,

"IT is inconvenient to me to come out, I ſhould elſe have waited on you with an account of a little evening Club which we are eſtabliſhing in Eſſex-ſtreet, in the Strand, and of which you are deſired to be one. It will be held at the Eſſex Head, now kept by an old ſervant of Thrale's. The company is numerous, and, as you will ſee by the liſt miſcellaneous. The terms are lax, and the expences light. Mr. Barry was adopted by Dr. Brockleſby, who joined with me in forming the plan. We meet thrice a week, and he who miſſes forfeits twopence.

"If you are willing to become a member, draw a line under your name. Return the liſt. We meet for the firſt time on Monday at eight.

I am, &c.

"Dec. 4, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

It did not ſuit Sir Joſhua to be one of this Club. But when I mention only Mr. Daines Barrington, Dr. Brockleſby, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Cooke,

Cooke, Mr. Joddrel, Mr. Paradiſe, Dr. Horſley, Mr. Windham*, I ſhall ſufficiently obviate the miſrepreſentation of it by Sir John Hawkins, as if it had been a low ale-houſe aſſociation, by which Johnſon was degraded. Johnſon himſelf, like his name-ſake Old Ben, compoſed the Rules of his Club‡. 1783. Ætat. 74.

In the end of this year he was ſeized with a ſpaſmodick aſthma of ſuch violence, that he was confined to the houſe in great pain, being ſometimes obliged to ſit all night in his chair, a recumbent

* I was in Scotland when this Club was founded, and during all the winter. Johnſon, however, declared I ſhould be a member, and invented a word upon the occaſion: "Boſwell [ſaid he] is a very *clubable* man." When I came to town I was propoſed by Mr. Barrington, and choſen. I believe there are few ſocieties where there is better converſation or more decorum. Several of us reſolved to continue it after our great founder was removed by death. Other members were added; and now, above ſix years ſince that loſs, we go on happily.

‡ RULES.

"To-day deep thoughts with me reſolve to drench
"In mirth, which after no repenting draws."

MILTON.

"The Club ſhall conſiſt of four-and-twenty.

"The meetings ſhall be on the Monday, Thurſday, and Saturday of every week; but in the week before Eaſter there ſhall be no meeting.

"Every member is at liberty to introduce a friend once a week, but not oftener.

"Two members ſhall oblige themſelves to attend in their turn every night from eight to ten, or to procure two to attend in their room.

"Every member preſent at the Club ſhall ſpend at leaſt ſix-pence; and every member who ſtays away ſhall forfeit three-pence.

"The maſter of the houſe ſhall keep an account of the abſent members; and deliver to the preſident of the night a liſt of the forfeits incurred.

"When

1783. Ætat. 74 recumbent poſture being ſo hurtful to his reſpiration, that he could not endure lying in bed; and there came upon him at the ſame time that oppreſſive and fatal diſeaſe, a dropſy. It was a very ſevere winter, which probably aggravated his complaints; and the ſolitude in which Mr. Levett and Mrs. Williams had left him, rendered his life very gloomy. Mrs. Deſmoulins, who ſtill lived, was herſelf ſo very ill that ſhe could contribute very little to his relief. He, however, had none of that unſocial ſhyneſs which we commonly ſee in people afflicted with ſickneſs. He did not hide his head in abſtraction; he did not deny himſelf to

"When any member returns after abſence, he ſhall immediately lay down his forfeits; which if he omits to do, the Preſident ſhall require.

"There ſhall be no general reckoning, but every man ſhall adjuſt his own expences.

"The night of indiſpenſable attendance will come to every member once a month. Whoever ſhall for three months together omit to attend himſelf, or by ſubſtitution, nor ſhall make any apology in the fourth month, ſhall be conſidered as having abdicated the Club.

"When a vacancy is to be filled, the name of the candidate, and of the member recommending him, ſhall ſtand in the Club-room three nights. On the fourth he may be choſen by ballot; ſix members, at leaſt, being preſent, and two-thirds of the ballot being in his favour; or the majority, ſhould the numbers not be diviſible by three.

"The maſter of the houſe ſhall give notice, ſix days before, to each of thoſe members whoſe turn of neceſſary attendance is come.

"The notice may be in theſe words:—'Sir, On ——— the ——— of ———, will be your turn of preſiding at the Eſſex-Head. Your company is therefore earneſtly requeſted.'

"One penny ſhall be left by each member for the waiter."

Johnſon's definition of a Club in this ſenſe in his Dictionary, is, "An aſſembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions."

the

the viſits of his friends and acquaintances; but at all times, when he was not overcome by ſleep, was ready for converſation as in his beſt days. 1783. Ætat. 74.

To Mrs. LUCY PORTER, *in Lichfield.*

"DEAR MADAM,

"YOU may perhaps think me negligent that I have not written to you again upon the loſs of your brother, but condolences and conſolations are ſuch common and ſuch uſeleſs things, that the omiſſion of them is no great crime; and my own diſeaſes occupy my mind, and engage my care. My nights are miſerably reſtleſs, and my days, therefore, are heavy. I try, however, to hold up my head as high as I can.

"I am ſorry that your health is impaired; perhaps the ſpring and the ſummer may, in ſome degree, reſtore it; but if not, we muſt ſubmit to the inconveniencies of time, as to the other diſpenſations of Eternal Goodneſs. Pray for me, and write to me, or let Mr. Pearſon write for you. I am, &c.

"London, Nov. 29, 1783. SAM. JOHNSON."

And now I am arrived at the laſt year of the life of SAMUEL JOHNSON, a year in which, although paſſed in ſevere indiſpoſition, he nevertheleſs gave many evidences of the continuance of thoſe wondrous powers of mind, which raiſed him ſo high in the intellectual world. His converſation and his letters of this year were in no reſpect inferiour to thoſe of former years. 1784.

The following is a remarkable proof of his being alive to the moſt minute curioſities of literature.

1784. Ætat. 75.

To Mr. DILLY, *Bookſeller, in the Poultry.*

"SIR,

"THERE is in the world a ſet of books, which uſed to be ſold by the bookſellers on the bridge, and which I muſt entreat you to procure me. They are called, *Burton's Books*; the title of one is, *Admirable Curioſities, Rarities, and Wonders in England.* I believe there are about five or ſix of them; they ſeem very proper to allure backward readers; be ſo kind as to get them for me, and ſend me them with the beſt printed edition of 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted.' I am, &c.

"Jan. 6, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

His attention to the Eſſex Head Club appears from the following letter to Mr. Alderman Clark, a gentleman for whom he deſervedly entertained a great regard.

To RICHARD CLARK, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"YOU will receive a requiſition, according to the rules of the Club, to be at the houſe as Preſident of the night. This turn comes once a month, and the member is obliged to attend, or ſend another in his place. You were enrolled in the Club by my invitation, and I ought to introduce you; but as I am hindered by ſickneſs, Mr. Hoole will very properly ſupply my place as introductor, or yours as Preſident. I hope in milder weather to be a very conſtant attendant. I am, Sir, &c.

"Jan. 27, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

"You

"You ought to be informed, that the forfeits began with the year, and that every night of non-attendance incurs the mulct of three-pence, that is, nine-pence a week." 1784. Ætat. 75.

On the 8th of January I wrote to him, anxiously enquiring as to his health, and enclosing my "Letter to the People of Scotland, on the present State of the Nation."—"I trust, (said I) that you will be liberal enough to make allowance for my differing from you on two points, (the Middlesex Election and the American War) when my general principles of government are according to your own heart, and when, at a crisis of doubtful event I stand forth with honest zeal as an ancient and faithful baron. My reason for introducing these two points was, that as my opinions with regard to them had been declared at the periods when they were least favourable, I might have the credit of a man who is not a worshipper of ministerial power."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I HEAR of many inquiries which your kindness has disposed you to make after me. I have long intended you a long letter, which perhaps the imagination of its length hindered me from beginning. I will therefore, content myself with a shorter.

"Having promoted the institution of a new Club in the neighbourhood, at the house of an old servant of Thrale's, I went thither to meet the company, and was seized with a spasmodick asthma so violent, that with difficulty I got to my own house, in which I have been confined

1784. Æt. 75. ed eight or nine weeks, and from which I know not when I ſhall be able to go even to church. The aſthma, however, is not the worſt. A dropſy gains ground upon me; my legs and thighs are very much ſwollen with water, which I ſhould be content if I could keep there, but I am afraid that it will ſoon be higher. My nights are very ſleepleſs and very tedious. And yet I am extremely afraid of dying.

"My phyſicians try to make me hope, that much of my malady is the effect of cold, and that ſome degree at leaſt of recovery is to be expected from vernal breezes and ſummer ſuns. If my life is prolonged to autumn, I ſhould be glad to try a warmer climate; though how to travel with a diſeaſed body, without a companion to conduct me, and with very little money, I do not well ſee. Ramſay has recovered his limbs in Italy; and Fielding was ſent to Liſbon, where, indeed, he died; but he was, I believe paſt hope when he went. Think for me what I can do.

I received your pamphlet, and when I write again may perhaps tell you ſome opinion about it; but you will forgive a man ſtruggling with diſeaſe his neglect of diſputes, politicks, and pamphlets. Let me have your prayers. My compliments to your lady, and young ones. Aſk your phyſicians about my caſe; and deſire Sir Alexander Dick to write me his opinion.

"I am, dear Sir, &c.

"Feb. 11, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mrs. LUCY PORTER, *in Lichfield.*

"MY DEAREST LOVE,

"I HAVE been extremely ill of an aſthma and dropſy, but received, by the mercy of GOD,

GOD, ſudden an unexpected relief laſt Thurſday, by the diſcharge of twenty pints of water.—— Whether I ſhall continue free, or fill again, cannot be told. Pray for me. 1784. Æt. 75.

"Death, my dear, is very dreadful; let us think nothing worth our care but how to prepare for it: what we know amiſs in ourſelves let us make haſte to amend, and put our truſt in the mercy of GOD, and the interceſſion of our SAVIOUR. I am, dear Madam,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"Feb. 23, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE juſt advanced ſo far towards recovery as to read a pamphlet; and you may reaſonably ſuppoſe that the firſt pamphlet which I read was yours. I am very much of your opinion, and, like you, feel great indignation at the indecency with which the King is every day treated. Your paper contains very conſiderable knowledge of the hiſtory and of the conſtitution, very properly produced and applied. It will certainly raiſe your character*, though perhaps it may not make you a Miniſter of State.

* * * * *

"I deſire

* I ſent it to Mr. Pitt, with a letter, in which I thus expreſſed myſelf: "My principles may appear to you too monarchical; but I know and am perſuaded, they are not inconſiſtent with the true principles of liberty. Be this as it may, you, Sir, are now the Prime Miniſter, called by the Sovereign to maintain the rights of the Crown, as well as

1784. Ætat. 75. "I deſire you to ſee Mrs. Stewart once again, and tell her, that in the letter-caſe was a letter relating to me, for which I will give her, if ſhe is willing to give it me, another guinea. The letter is of conſequence only to me.

"I am, dear Sir, &c.

"London, Feb. 27, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

In conſequence of Johnſon's requeſt that I ſhould aſk our phyſicians about his caſe, and deſire Sir Alexander Dick to ſend his opinion, I tranſmitted him a letter from that very amiable Baronet, then in his eighty-firſt year, with his faculties as entire as ever; and mentioned his expreſſions to me in the note accompanying it: "With my moſt affectionate wiſhes for Dr. Johnſon's recovery, in which his friends, his country, and all mankind have ſo deep a ſtake:" and at the ſame time a full opinion upon his caſe by Dr. Gilleſpie, who, like Dr. Cullen, had the advantage of having paſſed through the gradations of ſurgery and pharmacy, and by ſtudy and practice had attained to ſuch ſkill, that my father ſettled on him two hundred pounds a year for five years, and fifty pounds a year during his life, as an *honorarium* to ſecure his particular attendance. The opinion was conveyed in a letter to me, beginning, "I am ſincerely ſorry for the bad ſtate of health your very learned and illuſtrious friend, Dr. Johnſon, labours under at preſent."

as thoſe of the people, againſt a violent faction. As ſuch, you are entitled to the warmeſt ſupport of every good ſubject of every department." He anſwered, "I am extremely obliged to you for the ſentiments you do me the honour to expreſs, and have obſerved with great pleaſure the *zealous and able ſupport* given to the CAUSE OF THE PUBLICK in the work you were ſo good to tranſmit to me."

To

1784.
Ætat. 75.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"PRESENTLY after I had ſent away my laſt letter, I received your kind medical packet. I am very much obliged both to you and your phyſicians for your kind attention to my diſeaſe. Dr. Gilleſpie has ſent an excellent *conſilium medicum*, all ſolid practical experimental knowledge. I am at preſent, in the opinion of my phyſicians (Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brockleſby) as well as my own, going on very hopefully. I have juſt begun to take vinegar of ſquills. The powder hurt my ſtomach ſo much, that it could not be continued.

"Return Sir Alexander Dick my ſincere thanks for his kind letter; and bring with you the rhubarb* which he ſo tenderly offers me.

"I hope dear Mrs. Boſwell is now quite well, and that no evil, either real or imaginary, now diſturbs you. I am, &c.

"London, March 2, 1784.

SAM. JOHNSON."

I alſo applied to three of the eminent phyſicians who had chairs in our celebrated ſchool of medicine at Edinburgh, Doctors Cullen, Hope, and Monro, to each of whom I ſent the following letter;

"DEAR SIR,

"DR. JOHNSON has been very ill for ſome time; and in a letter of anxious appre-

* From his garden at Preſtonfield, where he cultivated that plant with ſuch ſucceſs, that he was preſented with a gold medal by the Society of London for the Encouragement of Arts and Sciences.

henſion

1784. Aetat. 75. henſion he writes to me, 'Aſk your phyſicians about my caſe.'

"This, you ſee, is not authority for a regular conſultation: but I have no doubt of your advice to a man ſo eminent, and who, in his life of Garth, has paid your profeſſion a juſt and elegant compliment: 'I believe every man has found in phyſicians great liberality and dignity of ſentiment, very prompt effuſions of beneficence, and willingneſs to exert a lucrative art, where there is no hope of lucre.'

"Dr. Johnſon is aged ſeventy-four. Laſt ſummer he had a ſtroke of the palſy, from which he recovered almoſt entirely. He had, before that, been troubled with a catarrhous cough.—This winter he was ſeized with a ſpaſmodick aſthma, by which he has been confined to his houſe for about three months. Dr. Brockleſby writes to me, that upon the leaſt admiſſion of cold, there is ſuch a conſtriction upon his breaſt, that he cannot lye down in his bed, but is obliged to ſit up all night, and gets reſt, and ſometimes ſleep, only by means of laudanum and ſyrup of poppies; and that there are œdematous tumours on his legs and thighs. Dr. Brockleſby truſts a good deal to the return of mild weather. Dr. Johnſon ſays, that a dropſy gains ground upon him; and he ſeems to think a warmer climate would do him good. I underſtand he is now rather better, and is uſing vinegar of ſquills. I am, with great eſteem, dear Sir, Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

"March 7, 1784.

JAMES BOSWELL."

All of them paid the moſt polite attention to my letter, and its venerable object. Dr. Cullen's words concerning him were, "It would give me

me the greateſt pleaſure to be of any ſervice to a man whom the public properly eſteem, and whom I eſteem and reſpect as much as I do Dr. Johnſon." Dr. Hope's, "Few people have a better claim on me than your friend, as hardly a day paſſes that I do not aſk his opinion about this or that word." Dr. Monro's "I moſt ſincerely join you in ſympathizing with that very worthy and ingenious character, from whom this country has derived much inſtruction and entertainment." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Dr. Hope correſponded with his friend Dr. Brocklesby. Doctors Cullen and Monro wrote their opinions and preſcriptions to me, which I afterwards carried with me to London, and, ſo far as they were encouraging, communicated to Johnſon. The liberality on one hand, and grateful ſenſe of it on the other, I have great ſatisfaction in recording.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I AM too much pleaſed with the attention which you and your dear lady* ſhow to my welfare, not to be diligent in letting you know the progreſs which I make towards health. The dropſy, by GOD's bleſſing, has now run almoſt totally away by natural evacuation; and the aſthma, if not irritated by cold, gives me little trouble. While I am writing this, I have not any ſenſation of debility or diſeaſe. But I do not yet venture out, having been confined to the houſe from the thirteenth of December, now a quarter of a year.

* Who had written him a very kind letter.

"When

1784. Ætat. 75. "When it will be fit for me to travel as far as Auchinleck, I am not able to gueſs; but ſuch a letter as Mrs. Boſwell's might draw any man, not wholly motionleſs, a great way. Pray tell the dear lady how much her civility and kindneſs have touched and gratified me.

"Our parliamentary tumults have now begun to ſubſide, and the King's authority is in ſome meaſure re-eſtabliſhed. Mr. Pitt will have great power; but you muſt remember, that what he has to give muſt, at leaſt for ſome time, be given to thoſe who gave, and thoſe who preſerve his power. A new miniſter can ſacrifice little to eſteem or friendſhip; he muſt, till he is ſettled, think only of extending his intereſt.

* * * * * *

"If you come hither through Edinburgh, ſend for Mrs. Stewart, and give for me another guinea for the letter in the old caſe, to which I ſhall not be ſatisfied with my claim, till ſhe gives it me.

"Pleaſe to bring with you Baxter's Anacreon; and if you procure heads of Hector Boece, the hiſtorian, and Arthur Johnſton, the poet, I will put them in my room, or any other of the fathers of Scottiſh literature.

"I wiſh you an eaſy and happy journey, and hope I need not tell you that you will be welcome to, dear Sir, your moſt affectionate humble ſervant,

"London, March 18, 1784.

SAM. JOHNSON."

I wrote to him, March 28, from York, informing him that I had a high gratification in the triumph of monarchical principles over ariſtocratical influence, in that great county, in an addreſs to the King; that I was thus far on my way

way to him, but that news of the diſſolution of Parliament having arrived, I was to haſten back to my own country, where I had carried an addreſs to his Majeſty by a great majority, and had ſome intention of being a candidate to repreſent the county in Parliament. 1784. Ætat. 75.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

" DEAR SIR,

" YOU could do nothing ſo proper as to haſte back when you found the Parliament diſſolved. With the influence which your addreſs muſt have gained you, it may reaſonably be expected that your preſence will be of importance, and your activity of effect.

" Your ſolicitude for me gives me that pleaſure with every man feels from the kindneſs of ſuch a friend; and it is with delight I receive it by telling, that Dr. Brocklesby's account is true, and that I am, by the bleſſing of GOD, wonderfully relieved.

" You are entering upon a tranſaction which requires much prudence. You muſt endeavour to oppoſe without exaſperating; to practiſe temporary hoſtility, without producing enemies for life. This is, perhaps, hard to be done; yet it has been done by many, and ſeems moſt likely to be effected by oppoſing merely upon general principles, without deſcending to perſonal or particular cenſures or objections. One thing I muſt enjoin you, which is ſeldom obſerved in the conduct of elections;—I muſt entreat you to be ſcrupulous in the uſe of ſtrong liquors.—One night's drunkenneſs may defeat the labours of forty days well employed. Be firm, but not clamorous; be active, but not malicious; and

you

1784. Ætat. 75.

you may form ſuch an intereſt, as may not only exalt yourſelf, but dignify your family.

"We are, as you may ſuppoſe, all buſy here. Mr. Fox reſolutely ſtands for Weſtminſter, and his friends ſay will carry the election. However that be, he will certainly have a ſeat. Mr. Hoole has juſt told me, that the city leans towards the King.

"Let me hear, from time to time, how you are employed, and what progreſs you make.

"Make dear Mrs. Boſwell, and all the young Boſwells, the ſincere compliments of, Sir,

"Your affectionate humble ſervant,

"London, March 30, 1784.

SAM. JOHNSON."

To Mr. Langton he wrote with that cordiality which was ſuitable to the long friendſhip which had ſubſiſted between him and that gentleman.

March 27. "Since you left me, I have continued in my own opinion, and in Dr. Brocklesby's, to grow better with reſpect to all my formidable and dangerous diſtempers; though to a body battered and ſhaken as mine has lately been, it is to be feared that weak attacks may be ſometimes miſchievous. I have, indeed, by ſtanding careleſsly at an open window, got a very troubleſome cough, which it has been neceſſary to appeaſe by opium, in larger quantities than I like to take, and I have not found it give way ſo readily as I expected; its obſtinacy, however, ſeems at laſt diſpoſed to ſubmit to the remedy, and I know not whether I ſhould then have a right to complain of any morbid ſenſation. My aſthma is, I am afraid, conſtitutional and incurable; but it is only occaſional, and unleſs it be excited by labour or by cold, gives me no moleſtation, nor does it lay cloſe ſiege to life; for Sir John Floyer, whom the phyſical race conſider

der as authour of one of the beſt books upon it, panted on to ninety, as was ſuppoſed; and why were we content with ſuppoſing a fact ſo intereſting, of a man ſo conſpicuous, becauſe he corrupted, at perhaps ſeventy or eighty, the regiſter, that he might paſs for younger than he was? He was not much leſs than eighty, when to a man of rank who modeſtly aſked him his age, he anſwered, 'Go look;' though he was in general a man of civility and elegance. 1784. Ætat. 75.

"The ladies, I find, are at your houſe all well, except Miſs Langton, who will probably ſoon recover her health by light ſuppers. Let her eat at dinner as ſhe will, but not take a full ſtomach to bed. Pay my ſincere reſpects to the two principal ladies in your houſe; and when you write to dear Miſs Langton in Lincolnſhire, let her know that I mean not to break our league of friendſhip, and that I have a ſet of Lives for her, when I have the means of ſending it."

April 8. "I am ſtill diſturbed by my cough; but what thanks have I not to pay, when my cough is the moſt painful ſenſation that I feel?—and from that I expect hardly to be releaſed, while winter continues to gripe us with ſo much pertinacity. The year has now advanced eighteen days beyond the equinox, and ſtill there is very little remiſſion of the cold. When warm weather comes, which ſurely muſt come at laſt, I hope it will help both me and your young lady.

"The man ſo buſy about addreſſes is neither more nor leſs than our own Boſwell, who had come as far as York towards London, but turned back on the diſſolution, and is ſaid now to ſtand for ſome place. Whether to wiſh him ſucceſs, his beſt friends heſitate.

Let

1784. Ætat. 75. "Let me have your prayers for the completion of my recovery: I am now better than I ever expected to have been. May God add to his mercies the grace that may enable me to uſe them according to his will. My compliments to all."

April 13. "I had this evening a note from Lord Portmore*, deſiring that I would give you an account of my health. You might have had it with leſs circumduction. I am, by God's bleſſing, I believe, free from all morbid ſenſations, except a cough, which is only troubleſome. But I am ſtill weak, and can have no great hope of ſtrength till the weather be ſofter. The ſummer, if it be kindly, will, I hope enable me to ſupport the winter. God, who has ſo wonderfully reſtored me, can preſerve me in all ſeaſons.

"Let me enquire in my turn after the ſtate of your family, great and little, I hope Lady Rothes and Miſs Langton are both well. That is a good baſis of content. Then how goes George on with his ſtudies? How does Miſs Mary? And how does my own Jenny? I think I owe Jenny a letter, which I will take care to pay. In the mean time tell her that I acknowledge the debt.

"Be pleaſed to make my compliments to the ladies. If Mrs. Langton comes to London, ſhe will favour me with a viſit, for I am not well enough to go out."

* To which Johnſon returned this anſwer;

To the Right Honourable Earl of Portmore.

"Dr. Johnson acknowledges with great reſpect the honour of Lord Portmore's notice. He is better than he was; and will, as his Lordſhip directs, write to Mr. Langton."

"Bolt-court, Fleet-ſtreet, Apr. 13, 1784.

To

1784.
Ætat. 75.

To OZIAS HUMPHREY*, *Esq.*

" SIR,

" MR. HOOLE has told me with what benevolence you liſtened to a requeſt which I was almoſt afraid to make, of leave to a young painter† to attend you from time to time in your painting room, to ſee your operations, and receive your inſtructions.

" The young man has perhaps good parts, but has been without a regular education. He is my god-ſon, and therefore I intereſt myſelf in his progreſs and ſucceſs, and ſhall think myſelf much favoured if I receive from you a permiſſion to ſend him.

" My health is, by GOD's bleſſing, much reſtored, but I am not yet allowed by my phyſicians to go abroad; nor, indeed, do I think myſelf yet able to endure the weather. I am, Sir, your moſt humble ſervant,

" April 5, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

* The eminent painter, repreſentative of the ancient family of Homfrey (now ſpelt Humphrey) in the weſt of England; who, as appears from their arms which they have invariably uſed, have been (as I have ſeen authenticated by the beſt authority) one of thoſe among the Knights and Eſquires of honour who are repreſented by Holingſhead as having iſſued from the Tower of London on courſers apparelled for the juſtes accompanied by ladies of honour, leading every one a Knight, with a chain of gold, paſſing through the ſtreets of London into Smithfield, on Sunday at three o'clock in the afternoon, being the firſt Sunday after Michaelmas, in the fourteenth year of King Richard the Second. This family once enjoyed large poſſeſſions, but, like others, have loſt them in the progreſs of ages. Their blood, however, remains to them well aſcertained: and they may hope, in the revolution of events, to recover that rank in ſociety for which, in modern times, fortune ſeems to be an indiſpenſable requiſite.

† Son of Mr. Samuel Paterſon, eminent for his knowledge of books.

To

1784.
Ætat. 75.

To the ſame.

"SIR,

"THE bearer is my godſon, whom I take the liberty of recommending to your kindneſs; which I hope he will deſerve by his reſpect to your excellence, and his gratitude for your favours. I am, Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"April 10, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

To the ſame.

"SIR,

"I AM much obliged by your civilities to my god-ſon, but muſt beg of you to add to them the favour of permitting him to ſee you paint, that he may know how a picture is begun, advanced, and completed.

"If he may attend you in a few of your operations, I hope he will ſhew that the benefit has been properly conferred, both by his proficiency and his gratitude. At leaſt I ſhall conſider you as enlarging your kindneſs to, Sir,

"Your humble ſervant,

"May 31, 1784.

SAM. JOHNSON."

To the Reverend Dr. TAYLOR, *Aſhbourne, Derbyſhire.*

"DEAR SIR,

"WHAT can be the reaſon that I hear nothing from you? I hope nothing diſables you from writing. What I have ſeen, and what I have felt, gives me reaſon to fear every thing. Do not omit giving me the comfort of knowing, that after all my loſſes I have yet a friend left.

"I want

1784. Ætat. 75.

"I want every comfort. My life is very ſolitary and very cheerleſs. Though it has pleaſed God wonderfully to deliver me from the dropſy, I am yet very weak, and have not paſſed the door ſince the 13th of December. I hope for ſome help from warm weather, which will ſurely come in time.

"I could not have the conſent of the phyſicians to go to church yeſterday; I therefore received the holy Sacrament at home, in the room where I communicated with dear Mrs. Williams, a little before her death. O! my friend, the approach of death is very dreadful. I am afraid to think on that which I know I cannot avoid. It is in vain to look round and round for that help which cannot be had. Yet we hope and hope, and fancy that he who has lived to-day may live to-morrow. But let us learn to derive our hope only from GOD.

"In the mean time, let us be kind to one another. I have no friend now living, but you and Mr. Hector, that was the friend of my youth. Do not neglect, dear Sir,

"Yours affectionately.

"London, Eaſter Monday,
April 12, 1784. SAM. JOHNSON."

What follows is a beautiful ſpecimen of his gentleneſs and complacency to a young lady his god-child, one of the daughters of his friend Mr. Langton, then I think in her ſeventh year. He took the trouble to write it in a large round hand, nearly reſembling printed characters, that ſhe might have the ſatisfaction of reading it herſelf. The original lies before me, but ſhall be faithfully reſtored to her; and I dare ſay will be preſerved by her as a jewel as long as ſhe lives.

1784. Ætat. 75.

To Miſs JANE LANGTON, *in Rocheſter, Kent.*

" MY DEAREST MISS JENNY,

" I AM ſorry that your pretty letter has been ſo long without being anſwered; but, when I am not pretty well, I do not always write plain enough for young ladies. I am glad, my dear, to ſee that you write ſo well, and hope that you mind your pen, your book, and your needle, for they are all neceſſary. Your books will give you knowledge, and make you reſpected; and your needle will find you uſeful employment when you don't care to read. When you are a little older, I hope you will be very diligent in learning arithmetick; and, above all, that through your life you will carefully ſay your prayers, and read your bible. I am, my dear,

" Your moſt humble ſervant,

" May 10, 1784.

SAM. JOHNSON."

On Wedneſday, May 5, I arrived in London, and next morning had the pleaſure to find Dr. Johnſon greatly recovered. I but juſt ſaw him; for a coach was waiting to carry him to Iſlington, to the houſe of his friend the Reverend Mr. Strahan, where he went ſometimes for the benefit of good air, which, notwithſtanding his having formerly laughed at the general opinion on the ſubject, he now acknowledged was conducive to health.

One morning afterwards, when I found him alone, he communicated to me, with ſolemn earneſtneſs, a very remarkable circumſtance which had happened in the courſe of his illneſs, when he was much diſtreſſed by the dropſy. He had ſhut himſelf up, and employed a day in particular exerciſes of religion,—faſting, humiliation

liation, and prayer. On a ſudden he obtained extraordinary relief, for which he looked up to heaven with grateful devotion. He made no direct inference from this fact; but from his manner of telling it, I could perceive that it appeared to him as ſomething more than an incident in the common courſe of events. For my own part, I have no difficulty to avow that caſt of thinking, which by many modern pretenders to wiſdom, is called *ſuperſtitious*. But here I think even men of pretty dry rationality may believe, that there was an intermediate interpoſition of divine Providence, and that "the fervent prayer of this righteous man" availed*. 1784. Ætat. 75.

On Sunday, May 9, I found Colonel Vallancy, the celebrated antiquarian and engineer of Ireland, with him. On Monday the 10th I dined with him at Mr. Paradiſe's, where was a large company; Mr. Bryant, Mr. Joddrel, Mr. Hawkins Browne, &c. On Thurſday the 13th I dined with him at Mr. Joddrel's, with another

* Upon this ſubject there is a very fair and judicious remark in the life of Dr. Abernethy, in the firſt edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, which I ſhould have been glad to ſee in his Life which has been written for the ſecond edition of that valuable work. "To deny the exerciſe of a particular providence in the Deity's government of the world is certainly impious: yet nothing ſerves the cauſe of the ſcorner more than an incautious forward zeal in determining the particular inſtances of it."

In confirmation of my ſentiments, I am alſo happy to quote that ſenſible and elegant writer Mr. *Melmoth*, in Letter VIII. of his collection, publiſhed under the name of *Fitzoſborne*. "We may ſafely aſſert, that the belief of a particular Providence is founded upon ſuch probable reaſons as may well juſtify our aſſent. It would ſcarce, therefore, be wiſe to renounce an opinion which affords ſo firm a ſupport to the ſoul, in thoſe ſeaſons wherein ſhe ſtands in moſt need of aſſiſtance, merely becauſe it is not poſſible, in queſtions of this kind, to ſolve every difficulty which attends them."

1784. Ætat. 75. large company; the Biſhop of Exeter, Lord Monboddo*, Mr. Murphy, &c.

On Saturday, May 15, I dined with him at Dr. Brocklesby's, where were Colonel Vallancy, Mr. Murphy, and that ever-cheerful companion Mr. Devaynes, apothecary to his Majeſty. Of theſe days and others on which I ſaw him, I have no memorials, except the general recollection of his being able and animated in converſation, and appearing to reliſh ſociety as much as the youngeſt man. I find only theſe three ſmall particulars:—One, when a perſon was mentioned who ſaid, "I have lived fifty-one years in this world without having had ten minutes of uneaſineſs;" he exclaimed, "The man who ſays ſo lies. He attempts to impoſe on human credulity." The Biſhop of Exeter in vain obſerved, that men were very different.—His Lordſhip's manner was not impreſſive, and I learnt afterwards that Johnſon did not find out that the perſon who talked to him was a Prelate; if he had, I doubt not that he would have treated him with more reſpect; for once talking of George Pſalmanazar, whom he reverenced for his piety, he ſaid, "I ſhould as ſoon think of contradicting a biſhop." One of the company provoked him greatly by doing what he could

* I was ſorry to obſerve Lord Monboddo avoid any communication with Dr. Johnſon. I flattered myſelf that I had made them very good friends, (ſee "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," third edition, page 67,) but unhappily his Lordſhip had reſumed and cheriſhed a violent prejudice againſt my illuſtrious friend, to whom I muſt do the juſtice to ſay, there was on his part not the leaſt anger, but a good-humoured ſportiveneſs. Nay, though he knew of his Lordſhip's diſpoſition towards him, he was even kindly; as appeared from his inquiring of me after him, by an abbreviation of his name, "Well, how does *Monny?*"

leaſt

leaſt of all bear, which was quoting ſomething of his own writing, againſt what he then maintained. "What, Sir, (cried the gentleman,) do you ſay to 1784. Ætat. 75.

'The buſy, the peaceful night,
'Unfelt, uncounted, glided by?"

Johnſon having thus had himſelf preſented as giving an inſtance of a man who had lived without uneaſineſs was much offended, for he looked upon ſuch quotation as unfair. His anger burſt out in unjuſtifiable retort, inſinuating that the gentleman's remark was a ſally of ebriety; "Sir, there is one paſſion I would adviſe you to command. When you have drunk out that glaſs, don't drink another." Here was exemplified what Goldſmith ſaid of him, with the aid of a very witty image from one of Cibber's Comedies, "There is no arguing with Johnſon; for if his piſtol miſſes fire, he knocks you down with the butt end of it."—Another, when a gentleman of eminence in the literary world was violently cenſured for attacking people by anonymous paragraphs in news-papers—he, from the ſpirit of contradiction as I thought, took up his defence, and ſaid, "Come, come, this is not ſo terrible a crime; he means only to vex them a little. I do not ſay that I ſhould do it; but there is a great difference between him and me; what is fit for Hephæſtion is not fit for Alexander."—Another, when I told him that a young and handſome Counteſs ſaid to me, "I ſhould think that to be praiſed by Dr. Johnſon would make one a fool all one's life;" and that I anſwered, "Madam, I ſhall make him a fool to-day, by repeating this to him," he ſaid, "I am too old to be made a fool;

1784. Ætat. 75. fool; but if you ſay I am, I ſhall not deny it. I am much pleaſed with a compliment, eſpecially from a pretty woman."

On the evening of Saturday, May 15, he was in fine ſpirits, at our Eſſex-Head-Club. He told us, "I dined yeſterday at Mr. Garrick's, with Mrs. Carter, Miſs Hannah More, and Miſs Fanny Burney. Three ſuch women are not to be found. I know not where I could find a fourth, except Mrs. Lennox, who is ſuperiour to them all." BOSWELL. "What!—had you them all to yourſelf, Sir? JOHNSON. "I had them all as much as they were had; but it might have been better had there been more company there." BOSWELL. "Might not Mrs. Montagu have been a fourth?" JOHNSON. "Sir, Mrs. Montagu does not make a trade of her wit. But Mrs. Montagu is a very extraordinary woman; ſhe has a conſtant ſtream of converſation, and is always impregnated; it has always meaning." BOSWELL. "Mr. Burke has a conſtant ſtream of converſation. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; if a man were to go by chance at the ſame time under a ſhed, to ſhun a ſhower, he would ſay this is an extraordinary man. If Burke ſhould go into a ſtable to ſee his horſe dreſt, the oſtler would ſay we have had an extraordinary man here." BOSWELL. "Foote was a man who never failed in converſation. If he had gone into a ſtable—" JOHNSON. "Sir, if he had gone into a ſtable, the oſtler would have ſaid here has been a comical fellow; but he would not have reſpected him." BOSWELL. "And, Sir, the oſtler would have anſwered him, would have given him as good as he brought, as the common ſaying is." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; and Foote would have anſwered the oſtler.—When Burke does not deſcend to be merry, his converſation is very ſuperiour indeed.

deed. There is no proportion between the powers which he ſhews in ſerious talk and jocularity. When he lets himſelf down to that, he is in the kennel." I have in another place oppoſed, and I hope with ſucceſs, Dr. Johnſon's very ſingular and erroneous notion as to Mr. Burke's pleaſantry. Mr. Windham now ſaid low to me, that he differed from our great friend in this obſervation; for that Mr. Burke was often very happy in his merriment. It would not have been right for either of us to have contradicted Johnſon at this time, in a Society all of whom did not know and value Mr. Burke as much as we did. It might have occaſioned ſomething more rough, and at any rate would probably have checked the flow of Johnſon's good-humour. He called to us with a ſudden air of exultation, as the thought ſtarted into his mind, "O! Gentlemen, I muſt tell you a very great thing. The Empreſs of Ruſſia has ordered the 'Rambler' to be tranſlated into the Ruſſian language †. So I ſhall be read on the banks of the Wolga. Horace boaſts that his fame would extend as far as the banks of the Rhone; now the Wolga is farther from me than the Rhone was from Horace." Boswell. "You muſt certainly be pleaſed with this, Sir." Johnson. "I am pleaſed, Sir, to be ſure. A man is pleaſed to find that he has ſucceeded in that which he has endeavoured to do." 1784. Ætat. 75.

One of the company mentioned his having ſeen a noble perſon driving in his carriage, and looking exceedingly well, notwithſtanding his great age. Johnson. "Ah, Sir; that is nothing. Bacon obſerves, that a ſtout healthy old man is like a tower undermined."

† I have ſince heard that the report was not well-founded; but the elation diſcovered by Johnſon in the belief that it was true, ſhewed a noble ardour for literary fame.

On

1784. Ætat. 75. On Sunday, May 16, I found him alone; he talked of Mrs. Thrale with much concern, ſaying, "Sir, ſhe has done every thing wrong, ſince Thrale's bridle was off her neck;" and was proceeding to mention ſome circumſtances which have ſince been the ſubject of publick diſcuſſion, when he was interrupted by the arrival of Dr. Douglas, now Biſhop of Carliſle.

Dr. Douglas, upon this occaſion, refuted a miſtaken notion which is very common in Scotland, that the eccleſiaſtical diſcipline of the Church of England, though duly enforced, is inſufficient to preſerve the morals of the clergy, inaſmuch as all delinquents may be ſcreened by appealing to the Convocation, which being never authorized by the King to ſit for the diſpatch of buſineſs, the appeal never can be heard. Dr. Douglas obſerved, that this was founded upon ignorance; for that the Biſhops have ſufficient power to maintain diſcipline, and that the ſitting of the Convocation was wholly immaterial in this reſpect, it being not a Court of judicature, but like a parliament, to make canons and regulations as times may require.

Johnſon, talking of the fear of death, ſaid, "Some people are not afraid, becauſe they look upon ſalvation as the effect of an abſolute decree, and think they feel in themſelves the marks of ſanctification. Others, and thoſe the moſt rational in my opinion, look upon ſalvation as conditional; and as they never can be ſure that they have complied with the conditions, they are afraid."

In one of his little manuſcript diaries, about this time, I find a ſhort notice, which marks his amiable diſpoſition more certainly than a thouſand ſtudied declarations.—"Afternoon ſpent cheerfully and elegantly, I hope without offence

offence to God or man; though in no holy duty, yet in the general exercise and cultivation of benevolence." 1784. Ætat. 75.

On Monday, May 17, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's, where were Colonel Vallancy, Reverend Dr. Gibbons, and Mr. Capel Lofft, who, though a moſt zealous Whig, has a mind ſo full of learning and knowledge, and ſo much in exerciſe in various exertions, and withal ſo much liberality, that the ſtupendous powers of the literary Goliath, though they did not frighten this little David of popular ſpirit, could not but excite his admiration. There was alſo Mr. Braithwaite of the Poſt-office, that amiable and friendly man, who, with modeſt and unaffuming manners, has aſſociated with many of the wits of the age. Johnſon was very quieſcent to-day. Perhaps too I was indolent. I find nothing more of him in my notes, but that when I mentioned that I had ſeen in the King's library ſixty-three editions of my favourite Thomas a Kempis, amongſt which it was in eight languages, Latin, German, French, Italian, Spaniſh, Engliſh, Arabick, and Armenian, he ſaid, he thought it unneceſſary to collect many editions of a book, which were all the ſame, except as to the paper and print; he would have the original, and all the tranſlations, and all the editions which had any variations in the text. He approved of the famous collection of editions of Horace by Douglas, mentioned by Pope, who is ſaid to have a cloſet filled with them; and he ſaid, every man ſhould try to collect one book in that manner, and preſent it to a publick library.

On Tueſday, May 17, I ſaw him for a ſhort time in the morning. I told him that the mob had called out, as the King paſſed, No Fox —No

1784. Ætat. 75. —No Fox," which I did not like. He ſaid, "They were right, Sir." I ſaid, I thought not, for it ſeemed to be making Mr. Fox the King's competitor. There being no audience, ſo that there could be no triumph in a victory, he fairly agreed with me. I ſaid it might do very well, if explained thus: "Let us have no Fox;" underſtanding as a prayer to his Majeſty not to appoint that gentleman miniſter.

On Wedneſday, May 19, I ſat a part of the evening with him, by ourſelves. I obſerved, that the death of our friends might be a conſolation againſt the fear of our own diſſolution, becauſe we might have more friends in the other world than in this. He perhaps felt this as a reflection upon his apprehenſion as to death; and ſaid, with heat, "How can a man know *where* his departed friends are, or whether they will be his friends in the other world. How many friendſhips have you known formed upon principles of virtue? Moſt friendſhips are formed by caprice or by chance, mere confederacies in vice or leagues in folly."

We talked of our worthy friend Mr. Langton. He ſaid, "I know not who will go to Heaven if Langton does not. Sir, I could almoſt ſay, *Sit anima mea cum Langtono.*" I mentioned a very eminent friend as a virtuous man. JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; but ——— has not the evangelical virtue of Langton. ———, I am afraid, would not ſcruple to pick up a wench."

He however charged Mr. Langton with what he thought want of judgement upon an intereſting occaſion. "When I was ill (ſaid he) I deſired he would tell me ſincerely in what he thought my life was faulty. Sir, he brought me a ſheet of paper, on which he had written down

a ſheet

ſeveral texts of Scripture, recommending chriſtian charity. And when I queſtioned him what occaſion I had given for ſuch an animadverſion, all that he could ſay amounted to this—that I ſometimes contradicted people in converſation. Now what harm does it do to any man to be contradicted?" BOSWELL. "I ſuppoſe he meant the *manner* of doing it; roughly—and harſhly." JOHNSON. "And who is the worſe for that?" BOSWELL. "It hurts people of weak nerves." JOHNSON. "I know no ſuch weak-nerved people." Mr. Burke, to whom I related this conference, ſaid, "It is well, if when a man comes to die, he has nothing heavier upon his conſcience than having been a little rough in converſation." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Johnſon, at the time when the paper was preſented to him, though at firſt pleaſed with the attention of his friend, whom he thanked in an earneſt manner, ſoon exclaimed, in a loud and angry tone," What is your drift, Sir?" Sir Joſhua Reynolds pleaſantly obſerved, that it was a ſcene for a comedy, to ſee a penitent get into a violent paſſion and belabour his confeſſor*.

I have

* After all, I cannot but be of opinion, that as Mr. Langton was ſeriouſly requeſted by Dr. Johnſon to mention what appeared to him erroneous in the character of his friend, he was bound, as an honeſt man, to intimate what he really thought, which he certainly did in the moſt delicate manner; ſo that Johnſon himſelf, when in a quiet frame, was pleaſed with it. The texts ſuggeſted are now before me, and I ſhall quote a few of them. "Bleſſed are the meek, for they ſhall inherit the earth." *Mat.* v. 5.—"I therefore, the priſoner of the LORD, beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowlineſs and meekneſs, with long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in love." *Epheſ.* v. 1, 2.—"And above all theſe things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectneſs.

1784. Ætat. 75. I have no more of his converſation at the times when I ſaw him during the reſt of this month, till Sunday, the 30th of May, when I met him in the evening at Mr. Hoole's, where there was a large company both of ladies and gentlemen; Sir James Johnſton happened to ſay, that he paid no regard to the arguments of counſel at the bar of the Houſe of Commons, becauſe they were paid for ſpeaking. JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, argument is argument. You cannot help paying regard to their arguments if they are good. If it were teſtimony you might diſregard it, if you knew that it were purchaſed. There is a beautiful image in Bacon upon this ſubject; teſtimony is like an arrow ſhot from a long-bow; the force of it depends on the ſtrength of the hand that draws it. Argument is like an arrow from a croſs-bow, which has equal force ſhot by a child."

He had dined that day at Mr. Hoole's, and Miſs Helen Maria Williams being expected in the evening, Mr. Hoole put into his hands her beautiful "Ode on the Peace*;" Johnſon read it over, and when this amiable, elegant, and accompliſhed young lady was preſented to him, he took her by the hand in the moſt courteous manner, and repeated the fineſt ſtanza of her poem; this was the moſt delicate and pleaſing compliment he could pay. Her reſpectable

feſtneſs. *Col.* iii. 14.—"Charity ſuffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, charity vaunteth not itſelf, is not puffed up: doth not behave itſelf unſeemly, is not eaſily provoked." 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4, 5.

* The Peace made by that very able ſtateſman, the Earl of Shelburne, now Marquis of Lanſdowne, which may fairly be conſidered as the foundation of all the proſperity of Great Britain ſince that time.

friend,

friend, Dr. Kippis, from whom I had this anecdote, was ſtanding by, and was not a little gratified. 1784. Ætat. 75.

Miſs Williams told me, that the only other time ſhe was fortunate enough to be in Dr. Johnſon's company, he aſked her to ſit down by him, which ſhe did, and upon her enquiring how he was, he anſwered, "I am very ill indeed, Madam. I am very ill even when you are near me; what ſhould I be were you at a diſtance."

He had now a great deſire to go to Oxford, as his firſt jaunt after his illneſs; we talked of it for ſome days, and I had promiſed to accompany him. He was impatient and fretful to-night, becauſe I did not at once agree to go with him on Thurſday. When I conſidered how ill he had been, and what allowance ſhould be made for the influence of ſickneſs upon his temper, I reſolved to indulge him, though with ſome inconvenience to myſelf, as I wiſhed to attend the muſical meeting in honour of Handel, in Weſtminſter-Abbey, on the following Saturday.

In the midſt of his own diſeaſes and pains, he was ever compaſſionate to the diſtreſſes of others, and actively earneſt in procuring them aid, as appears from a note to Sir Joſhua Reynolds, of June 1, in theſe words: "I am aſhamed to aſk ſome relief for a poor man, to whom, I hope, I have given what I can be expected to ſpare. The man importunes me, and the blow goes round. I am going to try another air on Thurſday."

On Thurſday, June 3, the Oxford poſt-coach took us up at Bolt-court. The other two paſſengers were Mrs. Beresford and her daughter, two very agreeable ladies from America; they were

1784. Ætat. 75. were going to Worceſterſhire, where they then reſided. Frank had been ſent by his maſter the day before to take places for us; and I found from the way-bill, that Dr. Johnſon had made our names be put down. Mrs. Beresford, who had read it, whiſpered me, "Is this the great Dr. Johnſon?" I told her it was; ſo ſhe was then prepared to liſten. As ſhe ſoon happened to mention in a voice ſo low that Johnſon did not hear it, that her huſband had been a member of the American Congreſs, I cautioned her to beware of introducing that ſubject, as ſhe muſt know how very violent Johnſon was againſt the people of that country. He talked a great deal, but I am ſorry I preſerved but little of the converſation. Miſs Beresford was ſo much charmed, that ſhe ſaid to me aſide, "How he does talk! Every ſentence is an eſſay." She amuſed herſelf in the coach with knotting; he would ſcarce allow this ſpecies of employment any merit. "Next to mere idleneſs (ſaid he) I think knotting is to be reckoned in the ſcale of inſignificance; though I once attempted to learn knotting. Dempſter's ſiſter (looking at me) endeavoured to teach me it; but I made no progreſs."

I was ſurpriſed at his talking without reſerve in the publick poſt-coach of the ſtate of his affairs; "I have (ſaid he) about the world I think above a thouſand pounds, which I intend ſhall afford Frank an annuity of ſeventy pounds a year."

At the inn where we ſtopped he was exceedingly diſſatisfied with ſome roaſt mutton which we had for dinner. The ladies I ſaw wondered to ſee the great philoſopher, whoſe wiſdom and wit they had been admiring all the way, get into ill humour from ſuch a cauſe. He ſcolded the waiter,

waiter, ſaying, "It is as bad as bad can be. It is ill-fed, ill-killed, ill-kept, and ill-dreſt." 1784. Ætat. 75.

He bore the journey very well, and ſeemed to feel himſelf elevated as he approached Oxford, that magnificent and venerable ſeat of Learning, Orthodoxy, and Toryiſm. Frank came in the heavy coach in readineſs to attend him; and we were received with the moſt polite hoſpitality at the houſe of his friend Dr. Adams, maſter of Pembroke College, who had given us a kind invitation. Before we were ſet down, I communicated to Johnſon my having engaged to return to London directly, for the reaſon I have mentioned, but that I would haſten down to him again. He was pleaſed that I had made this journey merely to keep him company. He was eaſy and placid, with Dr. Adams, Mrs. and Miſs Adams, and Mrs. Kennicot, widow of the learned Hebræan, who was here on a viſit. He ſoon diſpatched the inquiries which were made about his illneſs and recovery, by a ſhort and diſtinct narrative; and then aſſuming a gay air, repeated from Swift,

"Nor think on our approaching ills,
"And talk of ſpectacles and pills."

Dr. Newton, the Biſhop of Briſtol, having been mentioned, Johnſon, recollecting the manner in which he had been mentioned by that Prelate*, thus retaliated:—"Tom knew he ſhould be

* Dr. Newton in his Account of his own Life, after animadverting upon Mr. Gibbon's Hiſtory, ſays, "Dr. Johnſon's 'Lives of the Poets' afforded more amuſement; but candour was much hurt and offended at the malevolence that predominates in every part. Some paſſages, it muſt be allowed, are judicious and well written, but make not ſufficient compenſation for ſo much ſpleen and ill humour. Never

1784. Æt. 75. be dead before what he has ſaid of me would appear. He durſt not have printed it while he was alive." DR. ADAMS. "I believe his 'Diſſertations on the Prophecies' is his great work." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, it is *Tom's* great work; but how far it is great, or how much of it is Tom's, are other queſtions. I fancy a conſiderable part of it was borrowed." DR. ADAMS. "He was a very ſucceſsful man." JOHNSON. "I don't think ſo, Sir.—He did not get very high. He was late in getting what he did get; and he did not get it by the beſt means. I believe he was a groſs flatterer."

I fulfilled my intention by going to London, and returned to Oxford on Wedneſday the 9th of June, when I was happy to find myſelf again in the ſame agreeable circle at Pembroke Col-

Never was any biographer more ſparing of his praiſe, or more abundant in his cenſures. He ſeemingly delights more in expoſing blemiſhes, than in recommending beauties; ſlightly paſſes over excellencies, enlarges upon imperfections, and not content with his own ſevere reflections, revives old ſcandal, and produces large quotations from the forgotten works of former criticks. His reputation was ſo high in the republick of letters, that it wanted not to be raiſed upon the ruins of others. But theſe Eſſays, inſtead of raiſing a higher idea than was before entertained of his underſtanding, have certainly given the world a worſe opinion of his temper." The Biſhop was therefore the more ſurprized and concerned for his townſman, for *he* "*reſpected him not only for his genius and learning, but valued him much more for the more amiable part of his character, his humanity and charity, his morality and religion.*" The laſt ſentence we may conſider as the general and permanent opinion of Biſhop Newton; the remarks which precede it muſt, by all who have read Johnſon's admirable work, be imputed to the diſguſt and peeviſhneſs of old age. I wiſh it had not appeared, and that Dr. Johnſon had not been provoked by it to expreſs himſelf, not in reſpectful terms, of a Prelate, whoſe labours were certainly of conſiderable advantage both to literature and religion.

lege,

lege, with the comfortable proſpect of making ſome ſtay. Johnſon welcomed my return with more than ordinary glee. 1784. Ætat. 75.

He talked with great regard of the Honourable Archibald Campbell, whoſe character he had given at the Duke of Argyll's table, when we were at Inverary*; and at this time wrote out for me, in his own hand, a fuller account of that learned and venerable writer, which I have publiſhed in its proper place. Johnſon made a remark this evening which ſtruck me a good deal. "I never (ſaid he) knew a nonjuror who could reaſon." Surely he did not mean to deny that faculty to many of their writers; to Hickes, Brett, and other eminent divines of that perſuaſion; and did not recollect that the ſeven Biſhops, ſo juſtly celebrated for their magnanimous reſiſtance of arbitrary power, were yet Nonjurors to the Government. The nonjuring clergy of Scotland, indeed, who, excepting a few, have lately, by a ſudden ſtroke, cut off all ties of allegiance to the houſe of Stuart, and reſolved to pray for our preſent lawful Sovereign by name, may be thought to have confirmed this remark; as it may be ſaid, that the divine indefeaſible hereditary right which they profeſſed to believe, if ever true, muſt be equally true ſtill. Many of my readers will be ſurprized when I mention, that Johnſon aſſured me he had never in his life been in a nonjuring meeting-houſe.

Next morning at breakfaſt, he pointed out a paſſage in Savage's "Wanderer," ſaying, "Theſe are fine verſes."—"If (ſaid he) I had written with hoſtility of Warburton in my

* "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," 3d edit. p. 371.

1784. Æt. 75. Shakſpeare, I ſhould have quoted this couplet:

'Here Learning, blinded firſt, and then beguil'd,
'Looks dark as Ignorance, as Fancy wild.'

You ſee they'd have fitted him to a *T*." (ſmiling). DR. ADAMS. "But you did not write againſt Warburton." JOHNSON. "No, Sir, I treated him with great reſpect both in my Preface and in my Notes."

Mrs. Kennicot ſpoke of her brother the Reverend Mr. Chamberlayne, who had given up good preferments in the Church of England on his converſion to the Roman Catholick faith. Johnſon, who warmly admired every man who acted from a conſcientious regard to principle, erroneous or not, exclaimed fervently, "GOD bleſs him."

Mrs. Kennicot, in confirmation of Dr. Johnſon's opinion, that the preſent was not worſe than former ages, mentioned that her brother aſſured her, there was now leſs infidelity on the Continent than there had been; Voltaire and Roſſeau were leſs read. I aſſerted, from good authority, that Hume's infidelity was leſs read. JOHNSON. "All infidel writers drop into oblivion, when perſonal connections and the floridneſs of novelty are gone; though now and then a fooliſh fellow, who thinks he can be witty upon them, may bring them again into notice. There will ſometimes ſtart up a College joker, who does not conſider that what is a joke in a College will not do in the world. To ſuch defenders of Religion I would apply a ſtanza of a poem which I remember to have ſeen in ſome old collection:

'Hence-

'Henceforth be quiet and agree, 1784.
'Each kiſs his empty brother;
'Religion ſcorns a foe like thee, Ætat. 75.
'But dreads a friend like t'other.'

The point is well, though the expreſſion is not correct; *one*, and not *thee*, ſhould be oppoſed to *t'other**."

On the Roman Catholick religion he ſaid, "If you join the Papiſts externally, they will not interrogate you ſtrictly as to your belief in their tenets. No reaſoning Papiſt ever believes every article of their faith. There is one ſide on which a good man might be perſuaded to embrace it. A good man, of a timorous diſpoſition, in great doubt of his acceptance with God, and pretty credulous, might be glad to be of a church where there are ſo many helps to get to Heaven. I would be a Papiſt if I could. I have fear enough; but an obſtinate rationality prevents me. I ſhall never be a Papiſt, unleſs on the near approach of death, of

* I have inſerted the ſtanza as Johnſon repeated it from memory; but I have ſince found the poem itſelf, in "The Foundling Hoſpital for Wit," printed at London, 1749. It is as follows:

EPIGRAM, *occaſioned by a religious Diſpute at Bath.*

"On Reaſon, Faith, and Myſtery high,
"Two wits harangue the table;
"B———y believes he knows not why,
"N——— ſwears 'tis all a fable.

"Peace, coxcombs, peace, and both agree,
"N———, kiſs thy empty brother;
"Religion laughs at foes like thee,
"And dreads a friend like t'other."

1784. Ætat. 75. which I have a very great terrour. I wonder that women are not all Papiſts." BOSWELL. "They are not more afraid of death than men are." JOHNSON. "Becauſe they are leſs wicked." DR. ADAMS. "They are more pious." JOHNSON. "No, hang 'em, they are not more pious. A wicked fellow is the moſt pious when he takes to it. He'll beat you all at piety."

He argued in defence of ſome of the peculiar tenets of the church of Rome. As to the giving the bread only to the laity, he ſaid, "They may think, that in what is merely ritual, deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience, and I think they are as well warranted to make this alteration, as we are to ſubſtitute ſprinkling in the room of the ancient baptiſm. As to the invocation of ſaints, "Though I do not think it authoriſed, it appears to me, that 'the communion of ſaints' in the Creed means the communion with the ſaints in Heaven, as connected with 'The holy catholick church*." He admitted the influence of evil ſpirits upon our minds, and ſaid, "Nobody who believes the New Teſtament can deny it." I brought a volume of Dr. Hurd, the Biſhop of Worceſter's Sermons, and read to the company ſome paſſages from one of them, upon this text. "*Reſiſt the Devil and he will fly from you.*" James iv. 7.

* Waller, in his "Divine Poeſie," Canto firſt, has the ſame thought finely expreſſed:

"The Church triumphant, and the Church below,
"In ſongs of praiſe their preſent union ſhow:
"Their joys are full; our expectation long,
"In life we differ, but we join in ſong;
"Angels and we aſſiſted by this art,
"May ſing together, though we dwell apart."

I was

I was happy to produce ſo judicious and elegant a ſupporter* of a doctrine, which, I know not why, ſhould in this world of imperfect knowledge, and therefore of wonder and myſ- 1784. Ætat. 75.

* The Sermon thus opens :—That there are angels and ſpirits good and bad; that at the head of theſe laſt there is ONE more conſiderable and malignant than the reſt, who in the form, or under the name of a *ſerpent*, was deeply concerned in the fall of man, and whoſe *head*, as the prophetick language is, the ſon of man was one day to *bruiſe*; that this evil ſpirit, though that prophecy be in part completed, has not yet received his death's wound, but is ſtill permitted, for ends unſearchable to us, and in ways which we cannot particularly explain, to have a certain degree of power in this world hoſtile to its virtue and happineſs, and ſometimes exerted with too much ſucceſs; all this is ſo clear from Scripture, that no believer, unleſs he be firſt of all *ſpoiled by philoſophy and vain deceit*, can poſſibly entertain a doubt of it."

Having treated of *poſſeſſions*, his Lordſhip ſays, "As I have no authority to affirm that there *are* now any ſuch, ſo neither may I preſume to ſay with confidence, that there are *not* any."

"But then with regard to the influence of evil ſpirits at this day upon the SOULS of men, I ſhall take leave to be a great deal more peremptory.—[Then, having ſtated the various proofs]. All this I ſay is ſo manifeſt to every one who reads the Scriptures, that if we reſpect their authority, the queſtion concerning the reality of the demonick influence upon the minds of men is clearly determined."

Let it be remembered, that theſe are not the words of an antiquated or obſcure enthuſiaſt, but of a learned and polite Prelate now alive; and were ſpoken, not to a vulgar congregation, but to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn. His Lordſhip in this ſermon explains the words, "deliver us from evil," in the Lord's Prayer, as ſignifying a requeſt from "the evil one," that is, the Devil. This is well illuſtrated in a ſhort but excellent Commentary by my late worthy friend, the Reverend Dr. Lort, of whom it may truly be ſaid, *Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.* It is remarkable that Waller in his "Reflections on the ſeveral Petitions," in that ſacred form of devotion, has underſtood this in the ſame ſenſe,

"Guard us from all temptations of the FOE."

tery

1784. Ætat. 75. tery in a thouſand inſtances, be conteſted by ſome with an unthinking aſſurance and flippancy.

After dinner, when one of us talked of there being a great enmity between Whig and Tory. JOHNSON. "Why not ſo much, I think, unleſs when they come into competition with each other. There is none when they are only common acquaintance, none when they are of different ſexes. A Tory will marry into a Whig family, and a Whig into a Tory family, without any reluctance. But indeed in a matter of much more concern than political tenets, and that is religion, men and women do not concern themſelves much about difference of opinion. And ladies ſet no value on the moral character of men who pay their addreſſes to them; the greateſt profligate will be as well received as the man of the greateſt virtue, and this by a very good woman who ſays her prayers three times a day." Our ladies endeavoured to defend their ſex from this charge; but he roared them down! "No, no; a lady will take Jonathan Wild as readily as St. Auſtin, if he has three pence more: and, what is worſe, her parents will give her to him. Women have a perpetual envy of our vices; they are leſs vicious than we, not from choice, but becauſe we reſtrict them; they are the ſlaves of order and faſhion; their virtue is of more conſequence to us than our own, ſo far as concerns this world."

Miſs Adams mentioned a gentleman of licentious character, and ſaid "Suppoſe I had a mnd to marry that gentleman, would my parents conſent." JOHNSON. "Yes, they'd conſent, and you'd go. You'd go though they did not conſent." MISS ADAMS. "Perhaps their oppoſing might make me go." JOHNSON. "O, very

very well; you'd take one whom you think a bad man, to have the pleaſure of vexing your parents. You put me in mind of Dr. Barrowby the phyſician, who was very fond of ſwine's fleſh. One day when he was eating it, he ſaid, 'I wiſh I was a Jew.'—'Why ſo? (ſaid ſomebody); the Jews are not allowed to eat your favourite meat.'—Becauſe (ſaid he) I ſhould then have the guſt of eating it, with the pleaſure of ſinning," He then proceeded in his declamation. 1784. Ætat. 75.

Miſs Adams ſoon afterwards made an obſervation that I do not recollect, which pleaſed him much; he ſaid with a good humoured ſmile, "That there ſhould be ſo much excellence united with ſo much depravity is ſtrange."

Indeed, this lady's good qualities, merit, and accompliſhments, and her conſtant attention to Dr. Johnſon, were not loſt upon him. She happened to tell him that a little coffee-pot, in which ſhe had made his coffee, was the only thing ſhe could call her own. He turned to her with a complacent gallantry, "Don't ſay ſo, my dear; I hope you do'nt reckon my heart as nothing."

I aſked him if it was true as reported, that he had ſaid lately, "I am for the King againſt Fox; but I am for Fox againſt Pitt." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; the King is my maſter; but I do not know Pitt; and Fox is my friend."

"Fox (added he) is a moſt extraordinary man; here is a man (deſcribing him in ſtrong terms of objection in ſome reſpects according as he apprehended, but which exalted his abilities the more) who has divided the kingdom with Cæſar; ſo that it was a doubt whether the nation ſhould be ruled by the ſceptre of George the Third, or the tongue of Fox."

Dr.

1784. Ætat. 75. Dr. Wall, phyſician at Oxford, drank tea with us. Johnſon had in general a peculiar pleaſure in the company of phyſicians, which was certainly not abated by the converſation of this learned, ingenious, and pleaſing gentleman. Johnſon ſaid, "It is wonderful how little good Radcliffe's travelling fellowſhips have done. I know nothing that has been imported by them; yet many additions to our medical knowledge might be got in foreign countries. Inoculation, for inſtance, has ſaved more lives than war deſtroys. And the cures performed by the Peruvian-bark are innumerable. But it is in vain to ſend our travelling phyſicians to France, and Italy, and Germany, for all that is known there is known here; I'd ſend them out of Chriſtendom; I'd ſend them among barbarous nations."

On Friday, June 11, we talked at breakfaſt, of forms of prayer. JOHNSON. "I know of no good prayers but thoſe in the 'Book of Common Prayer.'" DR. ADAMS. (in a very earneſt manner) "I wiſh, Sir, you would compoſe ſome family prayers." JOHNSON. "I will not compoſe prayers for you, Sir, becauſe you can do it for yourſelf. But I have thought of getting together all the books of prayers which I could, ſelecting thoſe which ſhould appear to me the beſt, putting out ſome, inſerting others, adding ſome prayers of my own, and prefixing a diſcourſe on prayer." We all now gathered about him, and two or three of us at a time joined in preſſing him to execute this plan. He ſeemed to be a little diſpleaſed at the manner of our importunity, and in great agitation called out, "Do not talk thus of what is ſo aweful. I know not what time GOD will allow me in this world. There are many things which I

wiſh

wiſh to do." Some of us perſiſted, and Dr. Adams ſaid, "I never was more ſerious about any thing in my life." JOHNSON. "Let me alone, let me alone; I am overpowered." And then he put his hands before his face, and reclined for ſome time upon the table. 1784. Ætat. 75.

I mentioned Jeremy Taylor's uſing, in his forms of prayer, "I am the chief of ſinners," and other ſuch ſelf-condemning expreſſions. "Now (ſaid I) this cannot be ſaid with truth by every man, and therefore is improper for a general printed form. I myſelf cannot ſay that I am the worſt of men. I *will* not ſay ſo." JOHNSON. "A man may know, that phyſically, that is, in the real ſtate of things, he is not the worſt man; but that morally he may be ſo. Law obſerves, that 'Every man knows ſomething worſe of himſelf, than he is ſure of in others.' You may not have committed ſuch crimes as ſome men have done; but you do not know againſt what degree of light they have ſinned. Beſides, Sir, 'the chief of ſinners' is a mode of expreſſion for 'I am a great ſinner.' So St. Paul ſpeaking of our SAVIOUR's having died to ſave ſinners, ſays, 'of whom I am the chief:' yet he certainly did not think himſelf ſo bad as Judas Iſcariot." BOSWELL. "But, Sir, Taylor means it literally, for he founds a conceit upon it. When praying for the converſion of ſinners, and of himſelf in particular, he ſays, 'LORD, thou wilt not leave thy *chief* work undone." JOHNSON. "I do not approve of figurative expreſſions in addreſſing the Supreme Being; and I never uſe them. Taylor gives a very good advice: 'Never lie in your prayers; never confeſs more than you really believe; never promiſe more than you mean to perform." I recollected this precept

1784. Ætat. 75. precept in his "Golden Grove." But his *example* for prayer contradicts his *precept*.

Dr. Johnſon and I went in Dr Adams's coach to dine with Dr. Nowell, Principal of St. Mary Hall, at his beautiful villa at Iffley, on the banks of the Iſis, about two miles from Oxford. While we were upon the road, I had the reſolution to aſk Johnſon whether he thought that the roughneſs of his manner had been an advantage or not, and if he would not have done more good if he had been more gentle? I proceeded to anſwer myſelf thus:—"Perhaps it has been of advantage, as it has given weight to what you ſaid. You could not, perhaps, have talked with ſuch authority without it." JOHNSON. "No, Sir; I have done more good as I am. Obſcenity and Impiety have always been repreſſed in my company." BOSWELL. "True, Sir, and that is more than can be ſaid of every Biſhop. Greater liberties have been taken in the preſence of a Biſhop, though a very good man, from his being milder, and therefore not commanding ſuch awe. Yet, Sir, many people who might have been benefited by your converſation, have been frightened away. A worthy friend of ours has told me, that he has often been afraid to talk to you." JOHNSON. "Sir, he need not have been afraid, if he had any thing rational to ſay. If he had not, it was better he did not talk."

Dr. Nowell is celebrated for having preached a ſermon before the Houſe of Commons, on the 30th of January, 1772, full of high Tory ſentiments, for which he was thanked as uſual, and printed it at their requeſt; but, in the midſt of that turbulence and faction which diſgraced a part of the preſent reign, the thanks were afterwards ordered to be expunged. This ſtrange conduct

conduct ſufficiently expoſes itſelf; and Dr. Nowell will ever have the honour which is due to a lofty friend of our monarchical conſtitution. Dr. Johnſon ſaid to me, "Sir, the Court will be very much to blame if he is not promoted." I told this to Dr. Nowell, and aſſerting my humbler, though not leſs zealous exertions in the ſame cauſe, I ſuggeſted that whatever return we might receive, we ſhould ſtill have the conſolation of being like Butler's ſteady and generous Royaliſt, 1784. Ætat. 75.

"True as the dial to the ſun,
"Although it be not ſhone upon."

We were well entertained and very happy at Dr. Nowell's, where was a very agreeable company, and we drank "Church and King," after dinner, with true Tory cordiality.

We talked of a certain clergyman of extraordinary character, who by exerting his talents in writing on temporary topicks, and diſplaying uncommon intrepidity, had raiſed himſelf to affluence. I maintained that we ought not to be indignant at his ſucceſs; for merit of every ſort was entitled to reward. JOHNSON. "Sir, I will not allow this man to have merit. No, Sir, what he has is rather the contrary; I will, indeed, allow him courage, and on this account we ſo far give him credit. We have more reſpect for a man who robs boldly on the high way, than for a fellow who jumps out of a ditch, and knocks you down behind your back. Courage is a quality ſo neceſſary for maintaining virtue, that it is always reſpected, even when it is aſſociated with vice."

I cenſured the coarſe invective which was become faſhionable in the Houſe of Commons, and ſaid that if members of parliament muſt attack

1784. Ætat. 75. tack each other perſonally in the heat of debate, it ſhould be done more genteely. JOHNSON. "No, Sir; that would be much worſe. Abuſe is not ſo dangerous when there is no vehicle of wit or delicacy, no ſubtle conveyance. The difference between coarſe and refined abuſe is as the difference of being bruiſed by a club, and wounded by a poiſoned arrow." I have ſince obſerved his poſition elegantly expreſſed by Dr. Young.

"As the ſoft plume gives ſwiftneſs to the dart,
"Good breeding ſends the ſatire to the heart."

On Saturday, June 12, there drank tea with us at Dr. Adams's, Mr. John Henderſon, ſtudent of Pembroke College, celebrated for his wonderful acquirements in Alchymy, Judicial Aſtrology, and other abſtruſe and curious learning; and the Rev. Herbert Croft, who I am afraid was ſomewhat mortified by Dr. Johnſon's not being highly pleaſed with ſome "Family Diſcourſes," which he had printed; they were in too familiar a ſtyle to be approved of by ſo manly a mind. I have no note of this evening's converſation, except a ſingle fragment. When I mentioned Thomas Lord Lyttelton's viſage, the prediction of the time of his death, and its exact fulfilment; JOHNSON. "It is the moſt extraordinary thing that has happened in my day. I heard it with my own ears, from his uncle, Lord Weſtcote. I am ſo glad to have every evidence of the ſpiritual world, that I am willing to believe it." DR. ADAMS. "You have evidence enough; good evidence, which needs not ſuch ſupport." JOHNSON. "I like to have more."

Mr.

Mr. Henderſon, with whom I had ſauntered in the venerable walks of Merton-College, and found him a very learned and pious man, he ſupt with us. Dr. Johnſon ſurprized him not a little, by acknowledging with a look of horrour, that he was much oppreſſed with the fear of death. The amiable Dr. Adams ſuggeſted that GOD was infinitely good. JOHNSON. "That he is infinitely good, as far as the perfection of his nature will allow, I certainly believe; but it is neceſſary for good upon the whole, that individuals ſhould be puniſhed. As to an *individual* therefore, he is not infinitely good; and as I cannot be *ſure* that I have fulfilled the conditions on which ſalvation is granted, I am afraid I may be one of thoſe who ſhall be damned." (looking diſmally). DR. ADAMS. "What do you mean by damned?" JOHNSON. (paſſionately and loudly) "Sent to Hell, Sir, and puniſhed everlaſtingly." DR. ADAMS. "I don't believe that doctrine." JOHNSON. "Hold, Sir; do you believe that ſome will be puniſhed at all?" DR. ADAMS. "Being excluded from Heaven will be a puniſhment; yet there may be no great ſuffering." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir; but, if you admit any degree of puniſhment, there is an end of your argument for infinite goodneſs ſimply conſidered; for, infinite goodneſs would inflict no puniſhment whatever. There is not infinite goodneſs phyſically conſidered; morally there is." BOSWELL. "But may not a man attain to ſuch a degree of hope as not to be uneaſy from the fear of death?" JOHNSON. "A man may have ſuch a degree of hope as to keep him quiet. You ſee I am not quiet, from the vehemence with which I talk; but I do not deſpair." MRS. ADAMS. "You ſeem, Sir, to forget the merits of our Redeemer." 1784. Ætat. 75.

1784. Ætat. 75. Redeemer." JOHNSON. "Madam, I do not forget the merits of my Redeemer; but my Redeemer has ſaid that he will ſet ſome on his right-hand, and ſome on his left."—He was in gloomy agitation, and ſaid, "I'll have no more on't." If what has now been ſtated ſhould be urged by the enemies of Chriſtianity, as if its influence on the mind were not benignant, let it be remembered, that Johnſon's temperament was melancholy, of which ſuch direful apprehenſions of futurity are often a common effect. We ſhall preſently ſee that when he approached nearer to his awful change, his mind became tranquil, and he exhibited as much fortitude as becomes a man in that ſituation.

From the ſubject of death we paſſed to diſcourſe of life, whether it was upon the whole more happy or miſerable. Johnſon was decidedly for the balance of miſery: in confirmation of which I maintained, that no man would chooſe to lead over again the life which he had experienced. Johnſon acceded to that opinion in the ſtrongeſt terms. This is an enquiry often made; and its being a ſubject of diſquiſition is a proof that much miſery preſſes upon human feelings; for thoſe who are conſcious of a felicity of exiſtence, would never heſitate to accept of a repetition of it. I have met with very few who would. I have heard Mr. Burke make uſe of a very ingenious and plauſible argument on this ſubject; "Every man (ſaid he) would lead his life over again; for every man is willing to go on and take an addition to his life, which as he grows older, he has no reaſon to think will be better, or even ſo good as what has preceded." I imagine, however, the truth is, that there is a deceitful hope that the next part of life will be free from the pains, and anxieties,

anxieties, and ſorrows which we have already felt. We have for wiſe purpoſes "Condemn'd to Hope's deluſive mine;" as Johnſon finely ſays; and I may alſo quote the celebrated lines of Dryden, equally philoſophical and poetical: 1784. Ætat. 75.

"When I conſider life, 'tis all a cheat,
"Yet fool'd with hope, men favour the deceit;
"Truſt on and think to-morrow will repay;
"To-morrow's falſer than the former day;
"Lies worſe; and while it ſays we ſhall be
"bleſt
"With ſome new joys, cuts off what we poſſeſt.
"Strange cozenage! none would live paſt years
"again;
"Yet all hope pleaſure in what yet remain;
"And from the dregs of life think to receive,
"What the firſt ſprightly running could not
"give*."

It was obſerved to Dr. Johnſon, that it ſeemed ſtrange that he, who has ſo often delighted his company by his lively and brilliant converſation, ſhould ſay he was miſerable. JOHNSON. "Alas! it is all outſide; I may be cracking my joke and curſing the ſun. *Sun, how I hate thy beams!*" I knew not well what to think of this declaration whether to hold it as a genuine picture of his mind†, or as the effect of his perſuading him contrary to fact, that the poſition which he had aſſumed as to human unhappineſs, was true. We may apply to him a ſen-

* AURENGZEBE.

† Yet there is no doubt that a man may appear very gay in company who is ſad at heart. His merriment is like the ſound of drums and trumpets in a battle, to drown the groans of the wounded and dying.

tence

1784. Ætat. 75. tence in Mr. Greville's "Maxims, Characters, and Reflections ‡; a book which is entitled to much more praiſe than it has received: ARISTARCHUS is charming: how full of knowledge, of ſenſe, of ſentiment. You get him with difficulty to your ſupper; and after having delighted every body and himſelf for a few hours, he is obliged to return home;—he is finiſhing his treatiſe, to prove that unhappineſs is the portion of man."

On Sunday, June 13, our philoſopher was calm at breakfaſt. There was ſomething exceedingly pleaſing in our leading a College life, without reſtraint, and with ſuperiour elegance, in conſequence of our living in the maſter's houſe, and having the company of ladies. Mrs. Kennicot related, in his preſence, a lively ſaying of Dr. Johnſon to Miſs Hannah More, who had expreſſed a wonder that the poet who had written "Paradiſe Loſt," ſhould write ſuch poor Sonnets:—"Milton, Madam, was a genius that could cut a coloſſus from a rock; but could not carve heads upon cherry-ſtones."

We talked of the caſuiſtical queſtion, Whether it was allowable at any time to depart from *Truth?* JOHNSON. "The general rule is, that Truth ſhould never be violated, becauſe it is of the utmoſt importance to the comfort of life, that we ſhould have a full ſecurity by mutual faith; and occaſional inconveniencies ſhould be willingly ſuffered that we may preſerve it. There muſt, however, be ſome exceptions. If, for inſtance, a murderer ſhould aſk you which way a man is gone, you may tell him what is not true, becauſe you are under a previous obli-

‡ Page 139.

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gation not to betray a man to a murderer." 1784.
BOSWELL. "Suppoſing the man who wrote *Junius* were aſked whether he was the authour, might he deny it?" JOHNSON. "I don't know what to ſay to this. If you were *ſure* that he wrote *Junius*, would you, if he denied it, think as well of him afterwards? Yet it may be urged, that what a man has no right to aſk, you may refuſe to communicate; and there is no other effectual mode of preſerving a ſecret, and an important ſecret, the diſcovery of which may be very hurtful to you, but a flat denial; for if you are ſilent, or heſitate, or evade, it it will be held equivalent to a confeſſion. But, ſtay, Sir; here is another caſe. Suppoſing the authour had told me confidentially that he had written *Junius*, and I were aſked if he had, I ſhould hold myſelf at liberty to deny it, as being under a previous promiſe, expreſs or implied, to conceal it. Now what I ought to do for the authour, may I not do for myſelf? But I deny the lawfulneſs of telling a lie to a ſick man for fear of alarming him. You have no buſineſs with conſequences: you are to tell the truth. Beſides, you are not ſure what effect your telling him that he is in danger may have. It may bring his diſtemper to a criſis, and that may cure him. Of all lying I have the greateſt abhorrence at this, becauſe I believe it has been frequently practiſed on myſelf."

Ætat. 75.

I cannot help thinking, that there is much weight in the opinion of thoſe who have held, that Truth, as an eternal and immutable principle, ought, upon no account whatever, to be violated, from ſuppoſed previous or ſuperiour obli-

1784. Ætat. 75. obligations, of which every man being the judge for himſelf, there is great danger that we may too often, from partial motives, perſuade ourſelves that they exiſt; probably whatever extraordinary inſtances may ſometimes occur, where ſome evil may be prevented by violating this noble principle, it would be found that human happineſs would, upon the whole, be more perfect were Truth univerſally preſerved.

In the Notes to the "Dunciad" we find the following elegant and pathetick verſes, addreſſed to Pope*:

"While malice, Pope, denies thy page
"Its own celeſtial fire;
"While criticks, and while bards in rage
"Admiring, won't admire:

"While wayward pens thy worth aſſail,
"And envious tongues decry;
"Theſe times, though many a friend bewail,
"Theſe times bewail not I.

"But when the world's loud praiſe is thine,
"And ſpleen no more ſhall blame;
"When with thy Homer thou ſhalt ſhine
"In one eſtabliſh'd fame,

"When none ſhall rail, and every lay
"Devote a wreath to thee:
"That day (for come it will) that day
"Shall I lament to ſee."

It is ſurely not a little remarkable, that they ſhould appear without a name. Miſs Seward, knowing Dr. Johnſon's almoſt univerſal and minute literary information, ſignified a de-

* The annotator calls them "amiable verſes."

ſire

ſire that I ſhould aſk him who was the authour. 1784.
He was prompt with his anſwer:—"Why, Sir, Ætat. 75.
they were written by one Lewis, an under-maſter or uſher of Weſtminſter-ſchool, who publiſhed a miſcellany, in which 'Grongar Hill' firſt came out." Johnſon praiſed them highly, and repeated them with a noble animation. In the twelfth line, inſtead of "one eſtabliſhed fame," he repeated "one unclouded flame," which he thought was the reading in former editions; but I believe was a flaſh of his own genius. It was much more poetical than the other.

On Monday 14, and Tueſday, June 15, Dr. Johnſon and I dined on one of them, I forget which, with Mr. Mickle, tranſlator of the "Luſiad," at Wheatley, a very pretty country place a few miles from Oxford; and on the other with Dr. Wetherell, Maſter of Univerſity-College. From Dr. Wetherell's he went to viſit Mr. Sackville Parker the bookſeller; and when he returned to us, gave the following account of his viſit, ſaying, "I have been to ſee my old friend, Sack. Parker; I find he has married his maid; he has done right. She had lived with him many years in great confidence, and they had mingled minds; I do not think he could have found any wife that would have made him ſo happy. The woman was very attentive and civil to me; ſhe preſſed me to fix a day for dining with them, and to ſay what I liked, and ſhe would be ſure to get it for me. Poor Sack! He is very ill, indeed. We parted as never to meet again. It has quite broke me down." This pathetick narrative was ſtrangely diverſified with the grave and earneſt defence of a man's having married his maid. I could not but feel it in ſome degree ludicrous.

1784. Ætat. 75. In the morning of Tueſday, June 15, while we ſat at Dr. Adams's, we talked of a printed letter from the Reverend Herbert Croft, to a young gentleman who had been his pupil, in which he adviſed him to read to the end of whatever books he ſhould begin to read. JOHNSON. "This is ſurely a ſtrange advice; you may as well reſolve that whatever men you happen to get acquainted with, you are to keep to them for life. A book may be good for nothing; or there may be only one thing in it worth knowing; are we to read it all through? Theſe Voyages (pointing to the three large volumes of 'Voyages to the South Sea,' which were juſt come out) *who* will read them through? A man had better work his way before the maſt than read them through; they will be eaten by rats and mice, before they are read through. There can be little entertainment in ſuch books; one ſet of Savages is like another." BOSWELL. "I do not think the people of Otaheite can be reckoned Savages." JOHNSON. "Don't cant in defence of Savages." BOSWELL. "They have the art of navigation." JOHNSON. "A dog or a cat can ſwim." BOSWELL. "They carve very ingeniouſly." JOHNSON. "A cat can ſcratch, and a child with a nail can ſcratch." I perceived that this was none of the *mollia tempora fandi*, ſo deſiſted.

Upon his mentioning that when he came to College he wrote his firſt exerciſe twice over; but never did ſo afterwards, MISS ADAMS. "I ſuppoſe, Sir, you could not make them better." JOHNSON. "Yes, Madam, to be ſure, I could make them better. Thought is better than no thought." MISS ADAMS. "Do you think, Sir, you could make your Ramblers better?" JOHNSON. "Certainly I could." BOSWELL. "I'll

" I'll lay a bet, Sir, you cannot." JOHNSON. " But I will, Sir, if I chooſe. I ſhall make the beſt of them you ſhall pick out the better." BOSWELL. " But you may add to them. I will not allow of that." JOHNSON. " Nay, Sir, there are three ways of making them better;—putting out—adding—or correcting." 1784. Ætat. 75.

During our viſit at Oxford, the following converſation paſſed between him and me on the ſubject of my trying my fortune at the Engliſh bar: Having aſked whether a very extenſive acquaintance in London, which was very valuable, and of great advantage to a man at large, might not be prejudicial to a lawyer, by preventing him from giving ſufficient attention to buſineſs. JOHNSON. " Sir, you will attend to buſineſs as buſineſs lays hold of you. When not actually employed, you may ſee your friends as much as you do now. You may dine at a Club every day, and ſup with one of the members every night; and you may be as much at publick places as one who has ſeen them all would wiſh to be. But you muſt take care to attend conſtantly in Weſtminſter-hall; both to mind your buſineſs, as it is almoſt all learnt there (for nobody reads now;) and to ſhew that you want to have buſineſs. And you muſt not be too often ſeen at publick places, that competitors may not have it to ſay, 'He is always at the playhouſe or at Ranelagh, and never to be found at his chambers.' And, Sir, there muſt be a kind of ſolemnity in the manner of a profeſſional man. I have nothing particular to ſay to you on the ſubject. All this I ſhould ſay to any one; I ſhould have ſaid it to Lord Thurlow twenty years ago."

THE PROFESSION may probably think this repreſentation of what is required in a Barriſter who

1784. who would hope for ſucceſs, to be by much too indulgent; but certain it is, that as

Ætat. 75.

"The wits of Charles found eaſier ways to fame,"

ſome of the lawyers of this age who have riſen high, have by no means thought it abſolutely neceſſary to ſubmit to that long and painful courſe of ſtudy which a Plowden, a Coke, a Hale conſidered as requiſite. My reſpected friend, Mr. Langton, has ſhewn me in the hand-writing of his grandfather, a curious account of a converſation which he had with Lord Chief Juſtice Hale, in which that great man tells him, "That for two years after he came to the inn of court, he ſtudied ſixteen hours a day; however (his Lordſhip added) that by this intenſe application he almoſt brought himſelf to his grave, though he were of a very ſtrong conſtitution, and after reduced himſelf to eight hours; but that he would not adviſe any body to ſo much; that he thought ſix hours a day, with attention and conſtancy was ſufficient; that a man muſt uſe his body as he would his horſe, and his ſtomach; not tire him at once, but riſe with an appetite.

On Wedneſday, June 19, Dr. Johnſon and I returned to London; he was not well to-day, and ſaid very little, employing himſelf chiefly in reading Euripides. He expreſſed ſome diſpleaſure at me, for not obſerving ſufficiently the various objects upon the road. "If I had your eyes, Sir, (ſaid he) I ſhould count the paſſengers." It was wonderful how accurate his obſervations of viſual objects was, notwithſtanding his imperfect eyeſight, owing to a habit of attention. That he was much ſatisfied with the

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reſpect paid to him at Dr. Adams's, is thus atteſted by himſelf: "I returned laſt night from Oxford, after a fortnight's abode with Dr. Adams, who treated me as well as I could expect or wiſh; and he that contents a ſick man, a man whom it is impoſſible to pleaſe, has ſurely done his part well *." 1784. Ætat. 75.

After his return to London from this excurſion, I ſaw him frequently, but have few memorandums; I ſhall therefore here inſert ſome particulars which I collected at various times †.

The Rev. Mr. Aſtle, of Aſhbourne in Derbyſhire, brother to the learned and ingenious Tho-

* "Letters to Mrs. Thrale," Vol. II. p. 372.

† Having unexpectedly by the favour of Mr. Stone, of London-Field, Hackney, ſeen the original in Johnſon's hand-writing, of "The Petition of London to his Majeſty, in favour of Dr. Dodd," I now preſent it to my readers with ſuch paſſages as were omitted, incloſed in crotchets and the additions or variations marked in Italick.

"That William Dodd, Doctor of Laws, now lying under ſentence of death *in your Majeſty's gaol of Newgate*, for the crime of forgery, has for a great part of his life ſet an uſeful and laudable example of diligence in his calling, [and as we have reaſon to believe, has exerciſed his miniſtry with great fidelity and efficacy,] *which in many inſtances has produced the moſt happy effect.*

"That he has been the firſt inſtitutor, [or] *and* a very earneſt and active promoter of ſeveral modes of uſeful charity, and [tha] therefore [he] may be conſidered as having been on many occaſions a benefactor to the publick.

[That when they conſider his paſt life, they are willing to ſuppoſe his late crime to have been not the conſequence of habitual depravity, but the ſuggeſtion of ſome ſudden and violent temptation.]

"[That] *your Petitioners*, therefore conſidering his caſe as in ſome of its circumſtances unprecedented and peculiar, *and encouraged by your Majeſty's known clemency* [they] moſt humbly recommend the ſaid William Dodd to [his] *your* Majeſty's moſt gracious conſideration, in hope that he will be found not altogether [unfit] *unworthy* to ſtand an example of royal mercy."

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1784. Ætat. 75. mas Aſtle, Eſq. was from his early years known to Dr. Johnſon, who obligingly adviſed him as to his ſtudies, and recommended to him the following books, of which a liſt which he has been pleaſed to communicate, lies before me in Johnſon's own hand-writing.—*Univerſal Hiſtory (ancient).—Rollins's Ancient Hiſtory.—Puffendorf's Introduction to Hiſtory.—Vertot's Hiſtory of Knights of Malta.—Vertot's Revolution of Portugal.—Vertot's Revolutions of Sweden.—Carte's Hiſtory of England.—Preſent State of England.—Geographical Grammar.—Prideaux's Connection.—Nelſon's Feaſts and Faſts.—Duty of Man.—Gentleman's Religion.—Clarendon's Hiſtory.—Watt's Improvement of the Mind.—Watt's Logick.—Nature Diſplayed.—Lowth's Engliſh Grammar.—Blackwal on the Claſſicks.—Sherlock's Sermons.—Burnet's Life of Hale.—Dupin's Hiſtory of the Church.—Shuckford's Connections.—Law's Serious Call.—Walton's Complete Angler.—Sandys's Travels.—Sprat's Hiſtory of the Royal Society.—England's Gazetteer.—Goldſmith's Roman Hiſtory.—Some Commentaries on the Bible.*

It having been mentioned to Dr. Johnſon that a gentleman who had a ſon whom he imagined to have an extreme degree of timidity, reſolved to ſend him to a publick ſchool, that he might acquire confidence. "Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) this is a prepoſterous expedient for removing his infirmity; ſuch a diſpoſition ſhould be cultivated in the ſhade. Placing him at a public ſchool is forcing an owl upon day."

Speaking of a gentleman whoſe houſe was much frequented by low company; "Rags, Sir, (ſaid he,) will always make their appearance where they have a right to do it."

Of the ſame gentleman's mode of living, he ſaid, "Sir, the ſervants, inſtead of doing what they

they are bid, ſtand round the table in idle cluſters, gaping upon the gueſts; and ſeem as unfit to attend a company, as to ſteer a man of war." 1784. Ætat. 75.

A dull country magiſtrate gave Johnſon a long tedious account of his exerciſing his criminal juriſdiction, the reſult of which was his having ſentenced four convicts to tranſportation. Johnſon, in an agony of impatience to get rid of ſuch a companion, exclaimed, "I heartily wiſh, Sir, that I were a fifth."

Johnſon was preſent when a tragedy was read, in which there occurred this line:

"Who rules o'er freemen ſhould himſelf be free."

The company having admired it much, "I cannot agree with you (ſaid Johnſon): It might as well be ſaid,

'Who drives fat oxen ſhould himſelf be fat.'

He was pleaſed with the kindneſs of Mr. Cator, who was joined with him in Mr. Thrale's important truſt, and thus deſcribes him*: There is much good in his character, and much uſefulneſs in his knowledge." He found a cordial ſolace at that gentleman's ſeat of Beckenham, in Kent, which is indeed one of the fineſt places at which I ever was a gueſt.

Johnſon ſeldom incurred general cenſure of any profeſſion; but he was willing to allow a due ſhare of merit to the various departments neceſſary in civiliſed life. In a ſplenetick, ſarcaſtical, or jocular frame, however, he would

* "Letters to Mrs. Thrale," Vol. II. p. 284.

ſometimes

1784. Ætat. 75. ſometimes utter a pointed ſaying of that nature. One inſtance has been mentioned, where he gave a ſudden ſatirical ſtroke to the character of an *attorney*. The too indiſcriminate admiſſion to that employment, which requires both abilities and integrity, has given riſe to injurious reflexions, which are totally inapplicable to many very reſpectable men who exerciſe it with reputation and honour.

Johnſon having argued for ſome time with a pertinacious gentleman; his opponent, who had talked in a very puzzling manner. happened to ſay, "I do'nt underſtand you, Sir:" upon which Johnſon obſerved, "Sir, I have found you an argument; but I am not obliged to find you an underſtanding."

Talking to me of Horry Walpole (as the Honourable Horace Walpole is often called,) Johnſon allowed that he got together a great many curious little things, and told them in an elegant manner. Mr. Walpole thought Johnſon a more amiable man after reading his Letters to Mrs. Thrale; but never was one of the true admirers of that great man. We may ſuppoſe a prejudice conceived, if he ever heard Johnſon's account to Sir George Staunton, that when he made the ſpeeches in parliament for the Gentleman's Magazine, "he always took care to put Sir Robert Walpole in the wrong, and to ſay every thing he could againſt the electorate of Hanover." The celebrated Heroic Epiſtle, in which Johnſon is ſatyrically introduced, has been aſcribed both to Mr. Walpole and Mr. Maſon. One day at Mr. Courtenay's, when a gentleman expreſſed his opinion that there was more energy in that poem than could be expect-

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ed from Mr. Walpole; Mr. Warton, the late laureat obſerved, "It may have been written by Walpole, and buckram'd by Maſon." 1784. Ætat. 75.

He diſapproved of Lord Hailes for having modernifed the language of the ever-memorable John Hales of Eton, in an edition which his Lordſhip publiſhed of that writer's works. "An authour's language, Sir, (ſaid he,) is a characteriſtical part of his compoſition, and is alſo characteriſtical of the age in which he writes. Beſides, Sir, when the language is changed we are not ſure that the ſenſe is the ſame. No, Sir; I am ſorry Lord Hailes has done this."

Here it may be obſerved, that his frequent uſe of the expreſſion, *No, Sir*, was not always to intimate contradiction; for he would ſay ſo, when he was about to enforce an affirmative propoſition which had not been denied, as in the inſtance laſt mentioned. I uſed to conſider it as a kind of flag of defiance; as if he had ſaid, "Any argument you may offer againſt this is not juſt. No, Sir, it is not." It was like Falſtaff's "I deny your Major."

Sir Joſhua Reynolds having ſaid that he took the altitude of a man's taſte by his ſtories and his wit, and of his underſtanding by the remarks which he repeated; being always ſure that he muſt be a weak man who quotes common things with an emphaſis as if they were oracles. Johnſon agreed with him; and Sir Joſhua having alſo obſerved that the real character of a man was found out by his amuſements—JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir; no man is a hypocrite in his pleaſures."

Had Johnſon treated at large *De Claris Oratoribus*, he might have given us an admirable work. When the Duke of Bedford attacked the

1784. Æt. 75. the miniſtry as vehemently as he could, for having taken upon them to extend the time for the importation of corn, Lord Chatham in his firſt ſpeech in the Houſe of Lords, boldly avowed himſelf to be an adviſer of that meaſure. "My colleagues, (ſaid he,) as I was confined by indiſpoſition, did me the ſignal honour of coming to the bed-ſide of a ſick man, to aſk his opinion. But, had they not thus condeſcended, I ſhould have *taken up my bed and walked*, in order to have that opinion delivered at the Council Board." Mr. Langton, who was preſent, mentioned this to Johnſon, who obſerved, "Now, Sir, we ſee that he took theſe words as he found them; without conſidering, that though the expreſſion in ſcripture, *take up thy bed and walk*, ſtrictly ſuited the inſtance of the ſick man reſtored to health and ſtrength, who would of courſe be ſuppoſed to carry his bed with him, it could not be proper in the caſe of a man who was lying in a ſtate of feebleneſs, and who certainly would not add to the difficulty of moving at all, that of carrying his bed."

When I pointed out to him in the news-paper one of Mr. Grattan's animated and glowing ſpeeches, in favour of the freedom of Ireland, in which this expreſſion occurred, (I know not if accurately taken): "We will perſevere, till there is not one link of the Engliſh chain left to clank upon the rags of the meaneſt beggar in Ireland."—"Nay, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) don't you perceive that *one* link cannot clank."

Mrs. Thrale has publiſhed *, as Johnſon's, a kind of parody or counterpart of a fine poetical paſſage in one of Mr. Burke's ſpeeches on Ame-

* Anecdotes, p. 43.

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rican Taxation. It is vigorouſly but ſomewhat coarſely executed; and I am inclined to ſuppoſe, is not quite correctly exhibited. I hope he did not uſe the words "*vile agents* for the Americans in the Houſe of Parliament;" and if he did ſo, in an extempore effuſion, I wiſh the lady had not committed it to writing. 1784. Ætat. 75.

Mr. Burke uniformly ſhewed Johnſon the greateſt reſpect; and when Mr. Townſhend, now Lord Sydney, at a period when he was conſpicuous in oppoſition, threw out ſome reflection in parliament upon the grant of a penſion to a man of ſuch political principles as Johnſon; Mr. Burke, though then of the ſame party with Mr. Townſhend, ſtood warmly forth in defence of his friend, to whom, he juſtly obſerved, the penſion was granted ſolely on account of his eminent literary merit. I am well aſſured, that Mr. Townſhend's attack upon Johnſon was the occaſion of his "hitching in a rhyme;" for, that in the original copy of Goldſmith's character of Mr. Burke, in his "Retaliation," another perſon's name ſtood in the couplet where Mr. Townſhend is now introduced:

"Though fraught with all learning, kept ſtraining his throat,
"To perſuade *Tommy Townſhend* to lend him a vote."

It may be worth remarking, among the *minutiæ* of my collection, that Johnſon was once drawn for the militia, the Trained Bands of the City of London, and that Mr. Rackſtrow, of the Muſeum in Fleet-ſtreet, was his Colonel. It may be believed he did not ſerve in perſon; but the idea, with all its circumſtances, is certainly

1784. Ætat. 75. tainly laughable. He upon that occaſion provided himſelf with a muſquet, and with a ſword and belt, which I have ſeen hanging in his cloſet.

He was very conſtant to thoſe whom he once employed, if they gave him no reaſon to be diſpleaſed. When ſomebody talked of being impoſed on in the purchaſe of tea and ſugar, and ſuch articles; "That will not be the caſe (ſaid he,) if you go to a *ſtately ſhop*, as I always do. In ſuch a ſhop it is not worth their while to take a petty advantage."

An authour of moſt anxious and reſtleſs vanity being mentioned, "Sir, (ſaid he,) there is not a young ſapling upon Parnaſſus more ſeverely blown about by every wind of criticiſm than that poor fellow."

The difference he obſerved, between a well-bred and an ill-bred man is this: "One immediately attracts your liking, the other your averſion. You love the one till you find reaſon to hate him; you hate the other till you find reaſon to love him."

The wife of one of his acquaintance had fraudulently made a purſe to herſelf out of her huſband's fortune. Feeling a proper compunction in her laſt moments, ſhe confeſſed how much ſhe had ſecreted; but before ſhe could tell where it was placed, ſhe was ſeiſed with a convulſive fit and expired. Her huſband ſaid, he was more hurt by her want of confidence in him, than by the loſs of his money. "I told him (ſaid Johnſon) that he ſhould conſole himſelf; for *perhaps* the money might be *found*, and he was *ſure* that his wife was *gone*."

A foppiſh phyſician imagined that Johnſon had animadverted on his wearing a fine coat, and mentioned it to him. "I did not notice you;"

you;" was his anſwer. "Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) had you been dipt in Pactolus, I ſhould not have noticed you." 1784. Ætat. 75.

He ſeemed to take a pleaſure in ſpeaking in his own ſtyle; for when he had careleſsly miſſed it, he would repeat the thought tranſlated into it. Talking of the Comedy of "The Rehearſal," he ſaid, "It has not wit enough to keep it ſweet." This was eaſy;—he therefore caught himſelf, and pronounced a more rounded ſentence, "It has not vitality enough to preſerve it from putrefaction."

He cenſured a writer of entertaining Travels for aſſuming a feigned character, ſaying (in his ſenſe of the word) "He carries out one lye; we know not how many he brings back."

Though he had no taſte for painting, he admired much the manner in which Sir Joſhua Reynolds treated of his art, in his "Diſcourſes to the Royal Academy." He obſerved of a paſſage one day, "I think I might have ſaid this myſelf." And once when Mr. Langton was ſitting by him, he read one of them very eagerly, and expreſſed himſelf thus: "Very well, Maſter Reynolds; very well, indeed. But it will not be underſtood."

No man was more ready to make an apology when he had cenſured unjuſtly than Johnſon. When a proof-ſheet of one of his works was brought to him, he found fault with the mode in which a part of it was arranged, refuſed to read it, and in a paſſion deſired that the compoſitor * might be ſent to him. The compoſitor

* Compoſitor, in the art of printing, means, the perſon who adjuſts the types in the order in which they are to ſtand for printing; one who arranges what is called the *form*, from which an impreſſion is taken.

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1784. Ætat. 75. was Mr. Manning, a decent ſenſible man, who had compoſed about one half of his "Dictionary," when in Mr. Strahan's printing-houſe; and a great part of his "Lives of the Poets," when in Mr. Nichols's printing houſe; and now (in his ſeventy-ſeventh year) when in Mr. Baldwin's printing-houſe, has compoſed a part of this work concerning him. By producing the manuſcript, he at once ſatisfied Dr. Johnſon that he was not to blame. Upon which Johnſon candidly and earneſtly ſaid to him, "Mr. Compoſitor, I aſk your pardon, again and again."

His generous humanity to the miſerable was almoſt beyond example. The following inſtance is well atteſted: Coming home late one night, he found a poor woman lying in the ſtreet, ſo much exhauſted that ſhe could not walk; he took her upon his back, and carried her to his houſe, where he diſcovered that ſhe was one of thoſe wretched females who had fallen into the loweſt ſtate of vice, poverty, and diſeaſe. Inſtead of harſhly upbraiding her, he had her taken care of with all tenderneſs for a long time, at a conſiderable expence, till ſhe was reſtored to health, and endeavoured to put her into a virtuous way of living*.

He thought Mr. Caleb Whitefoord, ſingularly happy in hitting on the ſignature of *Papyrius Curſor*, to his ingenious and diverting croſs-readings of the news-papers; it being a real name of an ancient Roman, and clearly expreſſive of the thing done in this lively conceit.

He once in his life was known to have uttered what is called a *bull*; Sir Joſhua Rey-

* This circumſtance therefore alluded to in Mr. Courtenay's "Poetical Character," of him is ſtrictly true.

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nolds, when they were riding together in Devonſhire, complained that he had a very bad horſe, for that even when going down hill he moved ſlowly ſtep by ſtep. "Aye (ſaid Johnſon) and when he *goes* up hill, he *ſtands ſtill*." 1784. Ætat. 75.

He had a great averſion to geſticulating in company. He called once to a gentleman who offended him in that point, "Don't attitudeniſe." And when another gentleman thought he was giving additional force to what he uttered, by expreſſive movements of his hands, Johnſon fairly ſeized them, and held them down.

An authour of conſiderable eminence having engroſſed a good ſhare of the converſation in the company of Johnſon, and having ſaid nothing but what was very trifling and inſignificant; Johnſon when he was gone, obſerved to us, "It is wonderful what a difference there ſometimes is between a man's powers of writing and of talking. ——— writes with great ſpirit, but is a poor talker; had he held his tongue we might have ſuppoſed him to have been reſtrained by modeſty; but he has ſpoken a great deal today; and you have heard what ſtuff it was.

A gentleman having ſaid that a *congé d'elire*, has not perhaps the force of a command, but may be conſidered only as a ſtrong recommendation. "Sir, (replied Johnſon, who overheard him,) it is ſuch a recommendation, as if I ſhould throw you out of a two-pair-of-ſtairs window, and recommend to you to fall ſoft *."

Mr. Steevens, who paſſed many a ſocial hour with him during their long acquaintance, which

* This has been printed in other publications, "fall *to the ground*." But Johnſon himſelf gave me the true expreſſion which he had uſed, as above; meaning that the recommendation left as little choice in the one caſe as the other.

1784. Ætat. 75. commenced when they both lived in the Temple, has preſerved a good number of particulars concerning him, moſt of which are to be found in the department of Apothegms, &c. in the Collection of "Johnſon's Works." But he has been pleaſed to favour me with the following, which are original:

"One evening, previous to the trial of Baretti, a conſultation of his friends was held at the houſe of Mr. Cox, the Solicitor, in Southampton buildings, Chancery-lane. Among others preſent were, Mr. Burke and Dr. Johnſon, who differed in ſentiments concerning the tendency of ſome part of the defence the priſoner was to make. When the meeting was over, Mr. Steevens obſerved, that the queſtion between him and his friend had been agitated with rather too much warmth. 'It may be ſo, Sir, (replied the Doctor,) for Burke and I ſhould have been of one opinion, if we had had no audience."

"Dr. Johnſon once aſſumed a character in which perhaps even Mr. Boſwell never ſaw him. His curioſity having been excited by the praiſes beſtowed on the celebrated Torre's fire-works at Marybone-Gardens, he deſired Mr. Steevens to accompany him thither. The evening had proved ſhowery; and ſoon after the few people preſent were aſſembled, public notice was given, that the conductors to the wheels, ſuns, ſtars, &c. were ſo thoroughly water-ſoaked, that it was impoſſible any part of the exhibition ſhould be made. 'This is a mere excuſe (ſays the Doctor) to ſave their crackers for a more profitable company. Let us but hold up our ſticks, and threaten to break thoſe coloured lamps that ſurround the Orcheſtra, and we ſhall ſoon have our wiſhes gratified. The core of the fire-works cannot be injured; let the different

different pieces be touched in their reſpective centers, and they will do their offices as well as ever."—Some young men who overheard him, immediately began the violence he had recommended, and an attempt was ſpeedily made to fire ſome of the wheels which appeared to have received the ſmalleſt damage; but to little purpoſe were they lighted, for moſt of them completely failed.—The authour of 'The Rambler,' however, may be conſidered on this occaſion, as the ring-leader of a ſucceſsful riot, though not as a ſucceſsful pyrotechniſt." 1784. Ætat. 75.

"It has been ſuppoſed that Dr. Johnſon, ſo far as faſhion was concerned, was careleſs of his appearance in publick. But this is not altogether true, as the following ſlight inſtance may ſhow:—Goldſmith's laſt Comedy was to be repreſented during ſome court-mourning; and Mr. Steevens appointed to call on Dr. Johnſon, and carry him to the tavern where he was to dine with others of the Poet's friends. The Doctor was ready dreſſed, but in coloured cloaths; yet being told that he would find every one elſe in black, received the intelligence with a profuſion of thanks, haſtened to change his attire, all the while repeating his gratitude for the information that had ſaved him from an appearance ſo improper in the row of a front box. 'I would not (added he) for ten pounds, have ſeemed ſo retrograde to any general obſervance."

"He would ſometimes found his diſlikes on very ſlender circumſtances. Happening one day to mention Mr. Flexman, a Diſſenting miniſter, with ſome compliment to his exact memory in chronological matters; the Doctor replied, 'Let me hear no more of him, Sir. That is the fellow who made the Index to my Ramblers, and ſet down the name of Milton thus:—Milton, *Mr.* John."

1784. Mr. Steevens adds this teſtimony, "It is unfortunate however for Johnſon, that his partiÆtat. 75. cularities and frailties can be more diſtinctly traced than his good and amiable exertions. Could the many bounties he ſtudiouſly concealed, the many acts of humanity he performed in private, be diſplayed with equal circumſtantiality, his defects would be ſo far loſt in the blaze of his virtues, that the latter only would be regarded."

Though from my great admiration of Johnſon, I have wondered that he was not courted by all the great and all the eminent perſons of his time, it ought fairly to be conſidered, that no man of humble birth, who lived entirely by literature, in ſhort no authour by profeſſion, ever roſe in this country, into the perſonal notice which he did. In the courſe of this work a numerous variety of names have been mentioned, to which many might be added. I cannot omit Lord and Lady Lucan, at whoſe houſe he often enjoyed all that an elegant table, and the beſt company can contribute to happineſs; he found hoſpitality united with extraordinary accompliſhments, and embelliſhed with charms of which no man could be inſenſible.

On Tueſday, June 22, I dined with him at THE LITERARY CLUB, the laſt time of his being in that reſpectable ſociety. The other members preſent were the Biſhop of St. Aſaph, Lord Eliot, Lord Palmerſton, Dr. Fordyce, and Mr. Malone. He looked ill; but had ſuch a manly fortitude, that he did not trouble the company with melancholy complaints. They all ſhewed evident marks of kind concern about him, with which he was much pleaſed, and he exerted himſelf to be as entertaining as his indiſpoſition allowed him.

The

1784. Ætat. 75.

The anxiety of his friends to preſerve ſo ineſtimable a life, as long as human means might be ſuppoſed to have influence, made them plan for him a retreat from the ſeverity of a Britiſh winter, to the mild climate of Italy. This ſcheme was at laſt brought to a ſerious reſolution at General Paoli's, where I had often talked of it. One eſſential matter, however, I underſtood was neceſſary to be previouſly ſettled, which was obtaining ſuch an addition to his income, as would be ſufficient to enable him to defray the expence in a manner becoming the firſt literary character of a great nation, and, independent of all his other merits, the Authour of THE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. The perſon whom I above all others thought I ſhould apply to negociate this buſineſs, was the Lord Chancellor*, becauſe I knew that he highly valued Johnſon, and that Johnſon highly valued his Lordſhip; ſo that it was no degradation of my illuſtrious friend to ſolicit for him the favour of ſuch a man. I have mentioned what Johnſon ſaid of him to me when he was at the bar; and after his Lordſhip was advanced to the ſeals he ſaid of him, "I would prepare myſelf for no man in England but Lord Thurlow. When I am to meet with him I ſhould wiſh to know a day before." How he would have prepared himſelf I cannot conjecture. Would he have ſelected certain topicks, and conſidered them in every view ſo as to be in readineſs to argue them at all points? and what may we ſuppoſe thoſe topicks to have been? I once ſtarted the curious enquiry to the great man who was the ſubject of this compliment: he ſmiled, but did not purſue it.

I firſt conſulted with Sir Joſhua Reynolds, who perfectly coincided in opinion with me;

* Edward Lord Thurlow.

and

1784. Ætat. 75. and I therefore, though perſonally very little known to his Lordſhip, wrote to him†, ſtating the caſe, and requeſting his good offices for Dr. Johnſon. I mentioned that I was obliged to ſet out for Scotland early in the week after, ſo that if his Lordſhip had any commands for me as to this pious negociation, he would be pleaſed to ſend them before that time; otherwiſe Sir Joſhua Reynolds would give all attention to it.

This application was made not only without any ſuggeſtion on the part of Johnſon himſelf, but utterly unknown to him, nor had he the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion of it. Any inſinuations, therefore, which ſince his death have been thrown out, as if he had ſtooped to aſk what was ſuperfluous, are without any foundation. But, had he aſked it, it would not have been ſuperfluous; for though the money he had ſaved proved to be more than his friends imagined, or than I believe he himſelf, in his careleſſneſs concerning worldly matters, knew it to be, had he travelled upon the Continent, an augmentation of his income would by no means have been unneceſſary.

On Wedneſday, June 23, I viſited him in the forenoon, after having been preſent at the ſhocking ſight of fifteen men executed before Newgate. I ſaid to him, I was ſure that human life was not machinery, that is to ſay, a chain of fatality planned and directed by the Supreme Being, as it had in it ſo much wickedneſs and miſery, ſo many inſtances of both, as that by which my mind was now clouded. Were it

† It is ſtrange that Sir John Hawkins ſhould have related that the application was made by Sir Joſhua Reynolds, when he could ſo eaſily have been informed of the truth by inquiring of Sir Joſhua. Sir John's careleſſneſs to aſcertain facts is very remarkable.

machinery

machinery it would be better than it is in theſe reſpects, though leſs noble, as not being a ſyſtem of moral government. He agreed with me now, as he always did, upon the great queſtion of the liberty of the human will, which has been in all ages perplexed with ſo much ſophiſtry. But, Sir, as to the doctrine of Neceſſity, no man believes it. If a man ſhould give me arguments that I do not ſee, though I could not anſwer them, ſhould I believe that I do not ſee?" It will be obſerved, that Johnſon at all times made the juſt diſtinctions between the doctrines *contrary* to reaſon, and doctrines *above* reaſon. 1784. Ætat. 75.

Talking of the religious diſcipline proper for unhappy convicts, he ſaid, "Sir, one of our regular clergy will probably not impreſs their minds ſufficiently: they ſhould be attended by a Methodiſt preacher, or a Popiſh prieſt." Let me however obſerve, in juſtice to the Reverend Mr. Vilette, who has been Ordinary of Newgate for no leſs than ſeventeen years, in the courſe of which he has attended many hundreds of wretched criminals, that his earneſt and humane exhortations have been very effectual. His extraordinary diligence is highly praiſe-worthy, and merits a diſtinguiſhed reward.

On Thurſday, June 24, I dined with him at Mr. Dilly's, where were the Reverend Mr. Knox, maſter of Tunbridge-ſchool, Mr. Smith, Vicar of Southill, Dr. Beattie, Mr. Pinkerton, authour of various literary performances, and the Reverend Dr. Mayo. At my deſire old Mr. Sheridan was invited, as I was earneſt to have Johnſon and him brought together again by chance, that a reconciliation might be effected. Mr. Sheridan happened to come early, and having learnt that Dr. Johnſon was to be there, went away; ſo I found, with ſincere regret,

1784. Ætat. 75. gret, that my friendly intentions were hopeleſs. I recollect nothing that paſſed this day, except Johnſon's quickneſs, who, when Dr. Beattie obſerved, as ſomething remarkable which had happened to him, that he had chanced to ſee both No. 1, and No. 1,000, of the hackney-coaches, the firſt and the laſt; "Why, Sir, (ſaid he,) there is an equal chance for one's ſeeing thoſe two numbers as any other two." He was clearly right; yet the ſeeing of the two extremes, each of which is in ſome degree more conſpicuous than the reſt, could not but ſtrike one in a ſtronger manner than the ſight of any other two numbers.—Though I have neglected to preſerve his converſation, it was perhaps at this interview that Mr. Knox formed the notion of it which he has exhibited in his "Winter Evenings."

On Friday, June 25, I dined with him at General Paoli's, where he ſays, in one of his letters to Mrs. Thrale, "I love to dine." There was a variety of diſhes much to his taſte, of all which he ſeemed to me to eat ſo much, that I was afraid he might be hurt by it; and I whiſpered to the General my fear, and begged he would not preſs him. "Alas! (ſaid the General,) ſee how very ill he looks; he can live but a very ſhort time. Would you refuſe any ſlight gratification to a man under ſentence of death? There is a humane cuſtom in Italy, by which perſons in that melancholy ſituation are indulged with whatever they like to eat and drink, even with expenſive delicacies."

I ſhewed him ſome verſes on Lichfield by Miſs Seward, which I had that day received from her, and had the pleaſure to hear him approve of them. He confirmed to me the truth of a high compliment which I had been told he had

had paid to that lady, when ſhe mentioned to him "The Colombiade," an epick poem, by Madame du Boccage:—"Madam, there is not in it any thing equal to your deſcription of the ſea round the North Pole, in your Ode on the death of Captain Cook." 1784. Ætat. 75.

On Sunday, June 27, I found him rather better. I mentioned to him a young man who was going to Jamaica with his wife and children, in expectation of being provided for by two of her brothers ſettled in that iſland, one a clergyman and the other a phyſician. JOHNSON. "It is a wild ſcheme, Sir, unleſs he has a poſitive and deliberate invitation. There was a poor girl, who uſed to come about me, who had a couſin in Barbadoes, that, in a letter to her, expreſſed a wiſh ſhe would come out to that iſland, and expatiated on the comforts and happineſs of her ſituation. The poor girl went out: her couſin was much ſurprized, and aſked her how ſhe could think of coming. 'Becauſe (ſaid ſhe) you invited me.'—'Not I' (anſwered the couſin). The letter then was produced. 'I ſee it is true, (ſaid ſhe,) that I did invite you; but I did not think you would come.' They lodged her in an out-houſe, where ſhe paſſed her time miſerably; and as ſoon as ſhe had an opportunity ſhe returned to England. Always tell this, when you hear of people going abroad to relations, upon a notion of being well received. In the caſe which you mention, it is probable the clergyman ſpends all he gets, and the phyſician does not know how much he is to get."

We this day dined at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's, with General Paoli, Lord Eliot, (formerly Mr. Eliot, of Port Eliot,) Dr. Beattie, and ſome more company. Talking of Lord Cheſterfield; —JOHNSON. "His manner was exquiſitely elegant,

1784. Ætat. 75. gant, and he had more knowledge than I expected." Boswell. "Did you find, Sir, his converſation to be of a ſuperiour ſtyle." Johnson. "Sir, in the converſation which I had with him I had the beſt right to ſuperiority, for it was upon philology and literature." Lord Eliot, who had travelled at the ſame time with Mr. Stanhope, Lord Cheſterfield's natural ſon, juſtly obſerved, that it was ſtrange that a man who ſhewed he had ſo much affection for his ſon as Lord Cheſterfield did, by writing ſo many long and anxious letters to him, almoſt all of them when he was Secretary of State, which certainly was a proof of great goodneſs of diſpoſition, ſhould endeavour to make his ſon a raſcal. His Lordſhip told us, that Foote had intended to bring on the ſtage a father who had thus tutored his ſon, and to ſhew the ſon an honeſt man to every thing elſe, but practiſing his father's maxims upon him, and cheating him. Johnson. "I am much pleaſed with this deſign; but I think there was no occaſion to make the ſon honeſt at all. No; he ſhould be a conſummate rogue: the contraſt between honeſty and knavery would be the ſtronger. It ſhould be contrived ſo that the father ſhould be the only ſufferer by the ſon's villainy, and thus there would be poetical juſtice."

He put Lord Eliot in mind of Dr. Walter Harte. "I know (ſaid he) Harte was your Lordſhip's tutor, and he was alſo tutor to the Peterborough family. Pray, my Lord, do you recollect any particulars that he told you of Lord Peterborough? He is a favourite of mine, and is not enough known: his character has been only ventilated in party pamphlets." Lord Eliot ſaid, if Dr. Johnſon would be ſo good as to aſk him any queſtions, he would tell what

what he could recollect. Accordingly ſome things were mentioned. "But (ſaid his Lordſhip) the beſt account of Lord Peterborough that I have happened to meet with, is, 'Captain Carleton's Memoirs.' Carleton was deſcended of an anceſtor who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf at the ſiege of Derry. He was an officer; and, what was rare at that time, had ſome knowledge of engineering." Johnſon ſaid, he had never heard of the book. Lord Eliot had it at Port Eliot; but, after a good deal of enquiry, procured a copy in London, and ſent it to Johnſon, who told Sir Joſhua Reynolds that he was going to bed when it came, but was ſo much pleaſed with it, that he ſate up till he had read it through, and found in it ſuch an air of truth, that he could not doubt of its authenticity; adding, with a ſmile (in alluſion to Lord Eliot's been recently raiſed to the peerage,) "I did not think a *young Lord* could have mentioned to me a book in the Engliſh hiſtory that was not known to me." 1784. Ætat. 75.

An addition to our company came after we went up to the drawing-room; Dr. Johnſon ſeemed to riſe in ſpirits as his audience increaſed. He ſaid, "He wiſhed that Lord Orford's pictures, and Sir Aſhton Lever's Muſeum, might be purchaſed by the publick, becauſe both the money, and the pictures, and the curioſities, would remain in the country. Whereas, if they were ſold into another kingdom, the nation would indeed get ſome money, but would loſe the pictures and curioſities, which it would be deſirable we ſhould have for improvement in taſte and natural hiſtory. The only queſtion was, that as the nation was much in want of money, whether it would not be better to take a large price from a foreign ſtate."

He

1784. Ætat. 75. He entered upon a curious diſcuſſion of the difference between intuition and ſagacity, one being immediate in its effect, the other requiring a circuitous proceſs; one he obſerved, was the *eye* of the mind, the other the *noſe* of the mind.

A gentleman preſent took up the argument againſt him, and maintained that no man ever thinks of the *noſe of the mind*, not adverting that though that figurative phraſe ſeems ſtrange to us, as very unuſual, it is truly not more forced than Hamlet's "In my *mind's eye*, Horatio." He perſiſted much too long, and appeared to Johnſon as putting himſelf forward as his antagoniſt with too much preſumption; upon which he called to him in a loud tone, "What is it you are contending for, if you *be* contending?"—And afterwards imagining that the gentleman retorted upon him with a kind of ſmart drollery, he ſaid "Mr. ————, it does not become you to talk ſo to me. Beſides, ridicule is not your talent; you have there neither intuition nor ſagacity."—The gentleman proteſted that he intended no improper freedom, but had the greateſt reſpect for Dr. Johnſon. After a ſhort pauſe, during which we were ſomewhat uneaſy—JOHNSON. "Give me your hand, Sir. You were too tedious, and I was too ſhort." MR. ————. "Sir, I am honoured by your attention in any way. JOHNSON. "Come, Sir, let's have no more of it. We offended one another by our contention; let us not offend the company by our compliments."

He now ſaid, "He wiſhed much to go to Italy, and that he dreaded paſſing the winter in England." I ſaid nothing, but enjoyed a ſecret ſatisfaction in thinking that I had taken the moſt effectual meaſures to make ſuch a ſcheme practicable.

On

On Monday, June 28, I had the honour to receive from the Lord Chancellor the following letter: 1784. Ætat. 75.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"SIR,

"I SHOULD have anſwered your letter immediately; (if being much engaged when I received it) I had not put it in my pocket, and forgot to open it till this morning.

"I am muchobliged to you for the ſuggeſtion; and will adopt and preſs it as far as I can. The beſt argument, I am ſure, and I hope it is not likely to fail, is Dr. Johnſon's merit.—But it will be neceſſary, if I ſhould be ſo unfortunate as to miſs ſeeing you, to converſe with Sir Joſhua on the ſum it will be proper to aſk—in ſhort, upon the means of ſetting him out. It would be a reflection on us all, if ſuch a man ſhould periſh for want of the means to take care of his health. Yours, &c.

"THURLOW."

This letter gave me a very high ſatisfaction; I next day went and ſhewed it to Sir Joſhua Reynolds, who was exceedingly pleaſed with it. He thought that I ſhould now communicate the negociation to Dr. Johnſon, who might afterwards complain if the attention with which it had been honoured, ſhould be too long concealed from him. I intended to ſet out for Scotland next morning, but Sir Joſhua cordially inſiſted that I ſhould ſtay another day, that Johnſon and I might dine with him, that we three might talk of his Italian Tour, and as Sir Joſhua expreſſed himſelf, "have it all out." I haſtened to Johnſon, and was told by him that he was rather better

1784. Ætat. 75. better to-day. BOSWELL. "I am very anxious about you, Sir, and particularly that you ſhould go to Italy for the winter, which I believe is your own wiſh. JOHNSON. "It is, Sir." BOSWELL. "You have no objection, I preſume, but the money it would require." JOHNSON. "Why, no, Sir." Upon which I gave him a particular account of what had been done, and read to him the Lord Chancellor's letter.—He liſtened with much attention; then warmly ſaid, "This is taking prodigious pains about a man."—"O! Sir, (ſaid I, with much ſincere affection,) yourfriends would do every thing for you." He pauſed—grew more and more agitated—till tears ſtarted into his eyes, and he exclaimed with fervent emotion, "GOD bleſs you all." I was ſo affected that I alſo ſhed tears.—After a ſhort ſilence, he renewed and extended his grateful benediction, "GOD bleſs you all, for JESUS CHRIST's ſake." We both remained for ſome time unable to ſpeak.—He roſe ſuddenly and quitted the room quite melted in tenderneſs. He ſtaid but a ſhort time, till he had recovered his firmneſs; ſoon after he returned I left him, having firſt engaged him to dine at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's the next day.—I never was again under that roof which I had ſo long reverenced.

On Wedneſday, June 30, the friendly confidential dinner with Sir Joſhua Reynolds took place, no other company being preſent. Had I known that this was the laſt time that I ſhould enjoy in this world, the converſation of a friend whom I ſo much reſpected, and from whom I derived ſo much inſtruction and entertainment, I ſhould have been deeply affected. When I now look back to it, I am vexed that a ſingle word ſhould have been forgotten.

Both

Both Sir Joſhua and I were ſo ſanguine in our expectations, that we expatiated with confidence on the large proviſion which we were ſure would be made for him, conjecturing whether munificence would be diſplayed in one large donation, or in an ample increaſe of his penſion. He himſelf catched ſo much of our enthuſiaſm, as to allow himſelf to ſuppoſe it not impoſſible that our hopes might in one way or other be realiſed. He ſaid that he would rather have his penſion doubled than a grant of a thouſand pounds; "For (ſaid he) though probably I may not live to receive ſo much as a thouſand pounds, a man would have the conſciouſneſs that he ſhould paſs the remainder of his life in ſplendour, how long ſoever it might be." Conſidering what a moderate proportion an income of ſix hundred pounds a year bears to innumerable fortunes in this country, it is worthy of remark, that a man ſo truly great ſhould think it ſplendour. 1784. Ætat. 75.

As an inſtance of extraordinary liberality of friendſhip, he told us, that Dr. Brockleſby had upon this occaſion, offered him a hundred a year for his life. A grateful tear ſtarted into his eye, as he ſpoke this in a faultering tone.

Sir Joſhua and I endeavoured to flatter his imagination with agreeable proſpects in Italy. "Nay (ſaid he) I muſt not expect much of that; when a man goes to Italy merely to feel how he breathes the air, he can enjoy very little."

Our converſation turned upon living in the country, which Johnſon, whoſe melancholy mind required the diſſipation of quick ſucceſſive variety, had habituated himſelf to conſider as a kind of mental impriſonment. "Yet, Sir, (ſaid I,) there are many people who are content to live in the country." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is in the intellectual world as in the phyſical world; we are told

1784. Ætat. 75. told by natural philoſophers, that a body is at reſt in a place that is fit for it; they who are content to live in the country are *fit* for the country."

Talking of various enjoyments, I argued that a refinement of taſte was a diſadvantage, as they who have attained to it muſt be ſeldomer pleaſed than thoſe who have no nice diſcrimination, and are therefore ſatisfied with every thing that comes in their way. JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir; that is a paltry notion. Endeavour to be as perfect as you can in every reſpect."

I accompanied him in Sir Joſhua Reynolds's coach, to the entry of Bolt-court. He aſked me whether I would not go with him to his houſe; I declined it from an apprehenſion that my ſpirits would ſink. We bade adieu to each other affectionately in the carriage. When he had got down upon the foot-pavement, he called out, "Fare you well;" and without looking back, ſprung away with a kind of pathetick briſkneſs, if I may uſe that expreſſion, which ſeemed to indicate a ſtruggle to conceal uneaſineſs, and impreſſed me with a foreboding of our long, long ſeparation.

I remained one day more in town, to have the chance of talking over my negociation with the Lord Chancellor; but the multiplicity of his Lordſhip's important engagements did not allow of it; ſo I left the management of the buſineſs in the hands of Sir Joſhua Reynolds.

Soon after this time Dr. Johnſon had the mortification of being informed by Mrs. Thrale, that "what ſhe ſuppoſed he never believed*," was true, namely, that ſhe was actually going

* "Letters to Mrs. Thrale," Vol. II. page 375.

to

to marry Signor Piozzi, an Italian muſick-maſter. 1784. Ætat. 75.
He endeavoured to prevent it, but in vain. If ſhe would publiſh the whole of the correſpondence that paſſed between Dr. Johnſon and her on the ſubject, we ſhould have a full view of his real ſentiments. As it is, our judgement muſt be biaſſed by that characteriſtick ſpecimen, which Sir John Hawkins has given us: "Poor Thrale! I thought that either her virtue or her vice would have reſtrained her from ſuch a marriage. She is now become a ſubject for her enemies to exult over, and for her friends, if ſhe has any left, to forget or pity*."

It muſt be admitted that Johnſon derived a conſiderable portion of happineſs from the comforts and elegancies which he enjoyed in Mr. Thrale's family; but Mrs. Thrale aſſures us he was indebted for theſe to her huſband alone, who certainly reſpected him ſincerely. Her words are, *Veneration for his virtue, reverence for his talents*, delight *in his converſation, and* habitual endurance of a yoke my huſband firſt put upon me, *and of which he contentedly bore his ſhare for ſixteen or ſeventeen years, made me go on ſo long with Mr. Johnſon; but the perpetual confinement I will own to have been* terrifying, *in the firſt years of our friendſhip, and* irkſome *in the laſt; nor could I pretend to* ſupport *it without help when my coadjutor was no more.*" Alas! how different is this from the declarations which I have heard Mrs. Thrale make in his life-time, without a ſingle murmur againſt any peculiarities, or againſt any one circumſtance which attended their intimacy.

As a ſincere friend of the great man whoſe Life I am writing, I think it neceſſary to guard

* Dr. Johnſon's Letter to Sir John Hawkins, "Life," p. 570.

1784. Ætat. 75. my readers againſt the miſtaken notion of Dr. Johnſon's character, which this lady's "Anecdotes" of him ſuggeſt; for from the very nature and form of her book, it "lends deception lighter wings to fly."

"Let it be remembered, (ſays an eminent critick*,) that ſhe has compriſed in a ſmall volume all that ſhe could recollect of Dr. Johnſon in *twenty years*, during which period, doubtleſs, ſome ſevere things were ſaid by him; and they who read the book in *two hours*, naturally enough ſuppoſe that his whole converſation was of this complexion. But the fact is, I have been often in his company, and never *once* heard him ſay a ſevere thing to any one; and many others can atteſt the ſame. When he did ſay a ſevere thing it was generally extorted by ignorance pretending to knowledge, or by extreme vanity or affectation.

"Two inſtances of inaccuracy (adds he) are peculiarly worthy of notice: "It is ſaid †, '*That natural roughneſs of his manner ſo often mentioned, would, notwithſtanding the regularity of his notions burſt through them all from time to time; and he once bade a very celebrated lady, who praiſed him with too much zeal perhaps, or perhaps too ſtrong an emphaſis, (which always offended him,) conſider what her flattery was worth before ſhe choaked* him *with it.*'

"Now let the genuine anecdote be contraſted with this.—The perſon thus repreſented as being harſhly treated, though a very celebrated lady, was *then* juſt come to London from an obſcure ſituation in the country. At Sir Joſhua

* Who has been pleaſed to furniſh me with his remarks.
† "Anecdotes," p. 183.

Reynolds's

Reynolds's one evening ſhe met Dr. Johnſon. She very ſoon began to pay her court to him in the moſt fulſome ſtrain. 'Spare me, I beſeech you, dear Madam,' was his reply. She ſtill *laid it on*. 'Pray, Madam, let us have no more of this,' he rejoined. Not paying any attention to theſe warnings, ſhe continued ſtill her eulogy. At length, provoked by this indelicate and *vain* obtruſion of compliment, he exclaimed, 'Deareſt lady, conſider with yourſelf what your flattery is worth before you beſtow it ſo freely.' 1784. Ætat. 75.

"How different does this ſtory appear, when accompanied with all theſe circumſtances which really belong to it, but which Mrs. Thrale either did not know, or has ſuppreſſed.

"She ſays *, '*One gentleman, however, who dined at a nobleman's houſe in his company, and that of Mr. Thrale, to whom I was obliged for the anecdote, was willing to enter the liſts in defence of King William's character; and having oppoſed and contradicted Johnſon two or three times, petulantly enough, the maſter of the houſe began to feel uneaſy, and expect diſagreeable conſequences; to avoid which, he ſaid, loud enough for the Doctor to hear—Our friend here has no meaning now in all this, except juſt to relate at club to-morrow how he teized Johnſon at dinner to-day; this is all to do himſelf* honour.—*No, upon my word, (replied the other,) I ſee no* honour *in it, whatever you may do.—Well, Sir, (returned Mr. Johnſon, ſternly,) if you do not* ſee *the honour, I am ſure I* feel *the diſgrace.*'

"This is all ſophiſticated. Mr. Thrale was not in the company, though he might have related the ſtory to Mrs. Thrale. A friend, from

* "Anecdotes," p. 202.

1784. Ætat. 75. whom I had the ſtory, was preſent; and it was not at the houſe of a nobleman. On the obſervation being made by the maſter of the houſe on a gentleman's contradicting Johnſon, that he had talked for the honour, &c. the gentleman muttered, in a low voice, 'I ſee no honour in it;' and Dr. Johnſon ſaid nothing: ſo all the reſt (though *bien trouvée*) is mere garniſh."

I have had occaſion ſeveral times, in the courſe of this work, to point out the incorrectneſs of Mrs. Thrale, as to particulars which conſiſted with my own knowledge. But indeed ſhe has, in flippant terms enough, expreſſed her diſapprobation of that anxious deſire of authenticity which prompts a perſon who is to record converſations, to write them down *at the moment**. Unqueſtionably, if they are to be recorded at all, the ſooner it is done the better. This lady herſelf ſays †, "*To recollect, however, and to repeat the ſayings of Dr. Johnſon, is almoſt all that can be done by the writers of his Life; as his life, at leaſt ſince my acquaintance with him, conſiſted in little elſe than talking, when he was not employed in ſome ſerious piece of work.*" She boaſts of her having kept a common place-book; and, we find ſhe noted, at one time or other, in a very lively manner, ſpecimens of the converſation of Dr. Johnſon, and of thoſe who talked with him; but had ſhe done it recently, they probably would have been leſs erroneous; and we ſhould have been relieved from thoſe diſagreeable doubts of their authenticity, with which we muſt now peruſe them.

* "Anecdotes," p. 44. † Ibid. p. 23.

She

She ſays of him* " *He was the moſt charitable of mortals, without being what we call an* active friend. *Admirable at giving counſel; no man ſaw his way ſo clearly; but he* would not ſtir a finger *for the aſſiſtance of thoſe to whom he was willing enough to give advice.*" And again on the ſame page, " *If you wanted* a ſlight favour, *you muſt apply to people of other diſpoſitions; for* not a ſtep would Johnſon move *to obtain a man a vote in a ſociety, to repay a compliment which might be uſeful or pleaſing, to write a letter of requeſt, &c. or to obtain a hundred pounds a year more for a friend who perhaps had already two or three. No force could urge him to diligence, no importunity could conquer his reſolution to ſtand ſtill.*" 1784. Ætat. 75.

It is amazing that one who had ſuch opportunities of knowing Dr. Johnſon, ſhould appear ſo little acquainted with his real character. I am ſorry this lady does not advert, that ſhe herſelf contradicts the aſſertion of his being obſtinately defective in the *petite morale*, in the little endearing charities of ſocial life in conferring ſmaller favours; for ſhe ſays†, " *Dr. Johnſon was liberal enough in granting literary aſſiſtance to others, I think; and innumerable are the Prefaces, Sermons, Lectures, and Dedications which he uſed to make for people who begged of him.*" I am certain that a *more active friend* has rarely been found in any age. This work, which I fondly hope will reſcue his memory from obloquy, contains a thouſand inſtances of his benevolent exertions in almoſt every way that can be conceived; and particularly in employing his pen with a generous readineſs for thoſe to whom its aid could be uſeful. Indeed his obliging activity

* " Anecdotes," p. 51. † Ibid. p. 193.

in

1784. Ætat. 75. in doing little offices of kindneſs, both by letters and perſonal application, was one of the moſt remarkable features in his character; and for the truth of this I can appeal to a number of his reſpectable friends: Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Mr. Langton, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Mr. Malone, the Biſhop of Dromore, Sir William Scott, Sir Robert Chambers. And can Mrs. Thrale forget the advertiſements which he wrote for her huſband at the time of his election conteſt; the epitaphs on him and her mother; the playful and even trifling verſes, for the amuſement of her and her daughters; his correſponding with her children, and entering into their minute concerns, which ſhews him in the moſt amiable light?

She relates *, that Mr. Ch—lm—ley unexpectedly rode up to Mr. Thrale's carriage, in which Mr. Thrale and ſhe, and Dr. Johnſon were travelling; that he paid them all his proper compliments, but obſerving that Dr. Johnſon, who was reading, did not ſee him, '*tapt him gently on the ſhoulder.* , '*Tis Mr. Ch—lm—ley*;' *ſays my huſband.* '*Well, Sir—and what if it is Mr. Ch—lm—ley*;' *ſays the other, ſternly, juſt lifting his eyes a moment from his book, and returning to it again, with renewed avidity.*" This ſurely conveys a notion of Johnſon, as if he had been groſsly rude to Mr. Cholmondeley, a gentleman whom he always loved and eſteemed. If, therefore, there was an abſolute neceſſity for mentioning the ſtory at all, it might have been thought that her tenderneſs for Dr. Johnſon's character would have diſpoſed her to ſtate any thing that could ſoften it. Why then is there a

* "Anecdotes," p. 258.

total

total ſilence as to what Mr. Cholmondeley told her? —That Johnſon, who had known him from his earlieſt years, having been made ſenſible of what had doubtleſs a ſtrange appearance, took occaſion, when he afterwards met him, to make a very courteous and kind apology. There is another little circumſtance which I cannot but remark. Her book was publiſhed in 1785, ſhe had then in her poſſeſſion a letter from Dr. Johnſon, dated in 1777*, which begins thus: "Cholmondeley's ſtory ſhocks me, if it be true, which I can hardly think, for I am utterly unconſcious of it: I am very ſorry: and very much aſhamed." Why then publiſh the anecdote? Or if ſhe did, why not add the circumſtances, with which ſhe was well acquainted? 1784. Ætat. 75.

In his ſocial intercourſe ſhe thus deſcribes him†: "*Ever muſing till he was called out to converſe, and converſing till the fatigue of his friends, or the promptitude of his own temper to take offence, conſigned him back again to ſilent meditation.*" Yet in the ſame book‡ ſhe tells us, "*He was, however, ſeldom inclined to be ſilent, when any moral or literary queſtion was ſtarted; and it was on ſuch occaſions that, like the Sage in 'Raſſelas,' he ſpoke, and attention watched his lips; he reaſoned, and conviction cloſed his periods.*" His converſation, indeed, was ſo far from ever fatiguing his friends, that they regretted when it was interrupted or ceaſed, and could exclaim in Milton's language,

"With thee converſing, I forget all time."

* "Letters to Mrs. Thrale," Vol. II. p. 12.

† Anecdotes," p. 23. ‡ Ibid. p. 302.

I certainly,

1784. Ætat. 75. I certainly, then, do not claim too much in behalf of my illuſtrious friend in ſaying, that however ſmart and entertaing Mrs. Thrale's "Anecdotes" are, they muſt not be held as good evidence againſt him; for wherever an inſtance of harſhneſs and ſeverity is told, I beg leave to doubt its perfect authenticity; for though there may have been *ſome* foundation for it, yet, like that of his reproof to the "very celebrated lady," it may be ſo exhibited in the narration as to be very unlike the real fact.

The evident tendency of the following anecdote * is to repreſent Dr. Johnſon very deficient in affection, tenderneſs, or even common civility, "*When I one day lamented the loſs of a firſt couſin killed in America—'Pr'ythee, my dear, (ſaid he,) have done with canting; how would the world be the worſe for it, I may aſk, if all your relations were at once ſpitted like larks, and roaſted for Preſto's ſupper?—Preſto was the dog that lay under the table while we talked.*" I ſuſpect this too of exaggeration and diſtortion. I allow that he made her an angry ſpeech; but let the circumſtances fairly appear as told by Mr. Baretti who was preſent.

"Mrs. Thrale, while ſupping very heartily upon larks, laid down her knife and fork, and abruptly exclaimed, 'O, my dear Mr. Johnſon, do you know what has happened? The laſt letters from abroad have brought us an account that our poor couſin's head was taken off by a cannon-ball.' Johnſon, who was ſhocked both at the fact, and her light unfeeling manner of mentioning it, replied, 'Madam, it would give *you*

* "Anecdotes," p. 63.

very

very little concern if all your relations were ſpitted like thoſe larks, and dreſt for Preſto's ſupper *." 1784. Ætat. 75.

It is with concern that I find myſelf obliged to animadvert on the inaccuracies of Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes," and perhaps I may be thought to have dwelt too long upon her little collection. But as from Dr. Johnſon's long reſidence under Dr. Thrale's roof, and his intimacy with her, the account which ſhe has given of him may have made an unfavourable and unjuſt impreſſion, my duty, as a faithful biographer, has obliged me reluctantly to perform this unpleaſing taſk.

Having left the *pious negociation*, as I called it, in the beſt hands, I ſhall here inſert what relates to it. Johnſon wrote to Sir Joſhua Reynolds on July 6, as follows: "I am going, I hope, in a few days, to try the air of Derbyſhire, but hope to ſee you before I go. Let me, however, mention to you what I have much at heart.—If the Chancellor ſhould continue his attention to Mr. Boſwell's requeſt, and confer

* Upon mentioning this to my friend Mr. Wilkes, he, with his uſual readineſs, pleaſantly matched it with the following *ſentimental anecdote*. He was invited by a young man of faſhion at Paris, to ſup with him and a lady, who had been for ſome time his miſtreſs, but with whom he was going to part. He ſaid to Mr. Wilkes that he really felt very much for her, ſhe was in ſuch diſtreſs, and that he meant to make her a preſent of two hundred louis-d'ors. Mr. Wilkes obſerved the behaviour of Mademoiſelle, who ſighed indeed very piteouſly, and aſſumed every pathetick air of grief; but eat no leſs than three French pigeons, which are as large as Engliſh partridges, beſides other things. Mr. Wilkes whiſpered the gentleman, we often ſay in England, *Exceſſive ſorrow is exceeding dry*, but I never heard *Exceſſive ſorrow is exceeding hungry*. Perhaps *one* hundred will do." The gentleman took the hint.

with

1784. Ætat. 75. with you on the means of relieving my languid ſtate, I am very deſirous to avoid the appearance of aſking money upon falſe pretences. I deſire you to repreſent to his Lordſhip, what, as ſoon as it is ſuggeſted, he will perceive to be reaſonable.—That, if I grow much worſe, I ſhall be afraid to leave my phyſicians, to ſuffer the inconveniencies of travel, and pine in the ſolitude of a foreign country.—That, if I grow much better, of which indeed there is now little appearance, I ſhall not wiſh to leave my friends and my domeſtick comforts; for I do not travel for pleaſure or curioſity; yet if I ſhould recover, curioſity would revive.—In my preſent ſtate, I am deſirous to make a ſtruggle for a little longer life, and hope to obtain ſome help from a ſofter climate. Do for me what you can." He wrote to me July 26: "I wiſh your affairs could have permitted a longer and continued exertion of your zeal and kindneſs. They that have your kindneſs may want your ardour. In the mean time I am very feeble and very dejected."

By a letter from Sir Joſhua Reynolds I was informed, that the Lord Chancellor had called on him, and acquainted him that the application had not been ſucceſsful; but that his Lordſhip after ſpeaking highly in praiſe of Johnſon, as a man who was an honour to his country, deſired Sir Joſhua to let him know, that on granting a mortgage of his penſion, he ſhould draw on his Lordſhip to the amount of five or ſix hundred pounds; and that his Lordſhip explained the meaning of the mortgage to be, that he wiſhed the buſineſs to be conducted in ſuch a manner, as that Dr. Johnſon ſhould appear to be under the leaſt poſſible obligation. Sir Joſhua men-

mentioned, that he had by the ſame poſt communicated all this to Dr. Johnſon. 1784. Ætat. 75.

How Johnſon was affected upon the occaſion will appear from what he wrote to Sir Joſhua Reynolds:

Aſhbourne, Sept. 9. "Many words I hope are not neceſſary between you and me, to convince you what gratitude is excited in my heart by the Chancellor's liberality, and your kind offices. * * * * * *

"I have encloſed a letter to the Chancellor, which, when you have read it, you will be pleaſed to ſeal with a head, or any other general ſeal, and convey it to him: had I ſent it directly to him, I ſhould have ſeemed to overlook the favour of your intervention."

To the LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR *.

"MY LORD,

"AFTER a long and not inattentive obſervation of mankind, the generoſity of your Lordſhip's offer raiſes in me not leſs wonder than gratitude. Bounty, ſo liberally beſtowed, I ſhould gladly receive, if my condition made it neceſſary; for, to ſuch a mind, who would not be proud to own his obligations? But it has pleaſed GOD to reſtore me to ſo great a meaſure of health, that if I ſhould now appropriate ſo much of a fortune deſtined to do good, I could not eſcape from myſelf the charge of advancing a falſe claim.

* Sir Joſhua Reynolds, on account of the excellence both of the ſentiment and expreſſion of this letter, took a copy of it, which he ſhewed to ſome of his friends; one of whom, who admired it, being allowed to peruſe it leiſurely at home, a copy was made, and found its way into the news-papers and magazines. It was tranſcribed with ſome inaccuracies. I print it from the original draft in Johnſon's own hand-writing.

My

1784. Ætat. 75. My journey to the continent, though I once thought it neceſſary, was never much encouraged by my phyſicians; and I was very deſirous that your Lordſhip ſhould be told of it by Sir Joſhua Reynolds, as an event very uncertain; for if I grew much better, I ſhould not be willing, if much worſe, not able, to migrate.—Your Lordſhip was firſt ſolicited without my knowledge; but, when I was told, that you were pleaſed to honour me with your patronage, I did not expect to hear of a refuſal; yet, as I have had no long time to brood hope, and have not rioted in imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been ſcarce a diſappointment; and from your Lordſhip's kindneſs, I have received a benefit, which only men like you are able to beſtow. I ſhall now live *mihi carior*, with a higher opinion of my own merit. I am, my Lord,

" Your Lordſhip's moſt obliged,
" Moſt grateful, and moſt humble ſervant,
" SAM. JOHNSON."

" Sept. 1784.

Upon this unexpected failure I abſtain from preſuming to make any remarks, or offer any conjectures.

Having after repeated reaſonings, brought Dr. Johnſon to agree to my removing to London, and even to furniſh me with arguments in favour of what he had oppoſed; I wrote to him requeſting he would write them for me; he was ſo good as to comply, and I ſhall extract that part of his letter to me of June 11, as a proof how well he could exhibit a cautious yet encouraging view of it:

" I remem-

" I remember, and entreat you to remember, that *virtus eſt vitium fugere*, the firſt approach to riches is ſecurity from poverty. The condition upon which you have my conſent to ſettle in London is, that your expence never exceeds your annual income. Fixing this baſis of ſecurity, you cannot be hurt, and you may be very much advanced. The loſs of your Scottiſh buſineſs, which is all that you can loſe, is not to be reckoned as any equivalent to the hopes and poſſibilities that open here upon you. If you ſucceed, the queſtion of prudence is at an end; every body will think that done right which ends happily; and though your expectations, of which I would not adviſe you to talk too much, ſhould not be totally anſwered, you can hardly fail to get friends who will do for you all that your preſent ſituation allows you to hope: and if, after a few years, you ſhould return to Scotland, you will return with a mind ſupplied by various converſation, and many opportunities of enquiry, with much knowledge and materials for reflection and inſtruction." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Let us now contemplate Johnſon thirty years after the death of his wife, ſtill retaining for her all the tenderneſs of affection.

To the Rev. Mr. BAGSHAW, *at* BROMLEY.

" SIR,

" PERHAPS you may remember, that in the year 1753, you committed to the ground my dear wife. I now entreat your permiſſion to lay a ſtone upon her; and have ſent the inſcription, that, if you find it proper, you may ſignify your allowance.

" You will do me a great favour by ſhewing the place where ſhe lies, that the ſtone may protect her remains.

" Mr.

1784. Ætat. 75. "Mr. Ryland will wait on you for the inſcription *, and procure it to be engraved. You will eaſily believe that I ſhrink from this mournful office. When it is done, if I have ſtrength remaining, I will viſit Bromley once again, and pay you part of the reſpect to which you have a right from, Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

SAM. JOHNSON."

"July 12, 1784.

On the ſame day he wrote to Mr. Langton: "I cannot but think that in my languid and anxious ſtate, I have ſome reaſon to complain that I receive from you neither enquiry nor conſolation. You know how much I value your friendſhip, and with what confidence I expect your kindneſs, if I wanted any act of tenderneſs that you could perform; at leaſt if you do not know it, I think your ignorance is your own fault. Yet how long is it that I have lived almoſt in your neighbourhood without the leaſt notice.—I do not, however, conſider this neglect as particularly ſhown to me; I hear two of your moſt valuable friends make the ſame complaint. But why are all thus overlooked? You are not oppreſſed by ſickneſs, you are not diſtracted by buſineſs; if you are ſick, you are ſick of leiſure:—And allow yourſelf to be told, that no diſeaſe is more to be dreaded or avoided. Rather to do nothing than to do good, is the loweſt ſtate of a degraded mind. Boileau ſays to his pupil,

'*Que les vers ne ſoient pas vôtre eternel emploi,*
'*Cultivez vos amis.*'——

* Printed in his Works.

That

That voluntary debility, which modern language is content to term indolence, will, if it is not counteracted by reſolution, render in time the ſtrongeſt faculties lifeleſs, and turn the flame to the ſmoke of virtue.—I do not expect nor deſire to ſee you, becauſe I am much pleaſed to find that your mother ſtays ſo long with you, and I ſhould think you neither elegant nor grateful, if you did not ſtudy her gratification. You will pay my reſpects to both the ladies, and to all the young people.—I am going Northward for a while, to try what help the country can give me; but, if you will write, the letter will come after me." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Next day he ſet out on a jaunt to Staffordſhire and Derbyſhire, flattering himſelf that he might be in ſome degree relieved.

During his abſence from London he kept up a correſpondence with ſeveral of his friends, from which I ſhall ſelect what appears to me proper for publication, without attending nicely to chronological order.

To Dr. Brocklesby, he writes, Aſhbourne, July 20. " The kind attention which you have ſo long ſhewn to my health and happineſs, makes it as much a debt of gratitude as a call of intereſt, to give you an account of what befals me, when accident recovers me from your immediate care.—The journey of the firſt day was performed with very little ſenſe of fatigue; the ſecond day brought me to Lichfield, without much laſſitude, but I am afraid that I could not have borne ſuch violent agitation for many days together. Tell Dr. Heberden, that in the coach I read 'Ciceronianus,' which I concluded as I entered Lichfield. My affection and underſtanding went along with Eraſmus, except that once or twice he ſomewhat unſkilfully entangles Cicero's

1784. Ætat. 75. Cicero's civil or moral, with his rhetorical character.—I ſtaid five days at Lichfield, but, being unable to walk, had no great pleaſure, and yeſterday (19th) I came hither, where I am to try what air and attention can perform.—Of any improvement in my health I cannot yet pleaſe myſelf with the perception. * * * * * *.—The aſthma has no abatement. Opiates ſtop the fit, ſo as that I can ſit and ſometimes lie eaſy, but they do not now procure me the power of motion; and I am afraid that my general ſtrength of body does not encreaſe. The weather indeed is not benign; but how low is he ſunk whoſe ſtrength depends upon the weather! —I am now looking into Floyer, who lived with his aſthma to almoſt his ninetieth year. His book by want of order is obſcure, and his aſthma, I think, not of the ſame kind with mine. Something however I may perhaps learn.—My appetite ſtill continues keen enough; and what I conſider as a ſymptom of radical health, I have a voracious delight in raw ſummer fruit, of which I was leſs eager a few years ago.—You will be pleaſed to communicate this account to Dr. Heberden, and if any thing is to be done, let me have your joint opinion.—Now—*abite curæ*—let me enquire after the Club *."

July 31. "Not recollecting that Dr. Heberden might be at Windſor, I thought your letter long in coming. But, you know, *nocitura petuntur*, the letter which I ſo much deſired, tells me that I have loſt one of my beſt and tendereſt friends †. My comfort is, that he appeared to live like a man that had always before his eyes the fragility of our preſent exiſtence,

* At the Eſſex Head, Eſſex-ſtreet.
† Mr. Allen, the printer.

and

and was therefore, I hope, not unprepared to meet his judge.—Your attention, dear Sir, and that of Dr. Heberden, to my health is extremely kind. I am loth to think that I grow worſe; and cannot fairly prove even to my own partiality, that I grow much better." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Auguſt 5. "I return you thanks, dear Sir, for your unwearied attention, both medicinal and friendly, and hope to prove the effect of your care by living to acknowledge it."

Auguſt 12. "Pray be ſo kind as to have me in your thoughts, and mention my caſe to others as you have opportunity. I ſeem to myſelf neither to gain nor loſe ſtrength. I have lately tried milk, but have yet found no advantage, and am afraid of it merely as a liquid. My appetite is ſtill good, which I know is dear Dr. Heberden's criterion of the *vis vitæ*.—As we cannot now ſee each other, do not omit to write, for you cannot think with what warmth of expectation I reckon the hours of a poſt-day."

Auguſt 14. "I have hitherto ſent you only melancholy letters, you will be glad to hear ſome better account. Yeſterday the aſthma remitted, perceptibly remitted, and I moved with more eaſe than I have enjoyed for many weeks. May GOD continue his mercy.—This account I would not delay, becauſe I am not a lover of complaints, or complainers, and yet I have ſince we parted, uttered nothing till now but terrour and ſorrow. Write to me dear Sir."

Auguſt 16. "Better I hope, and better. My reſpiration gets more and more eaſe and liberty. I went to church yeſterday, after a very liberal dinner, without any inconvenience; it is indeed no long walk, but I never walked it without difficulty, ſince I came, before. * * * * * * * the intention was only to overpower

1784. Ætat. 75. the ſeeming *vis inertiæ* of the pectoral and pulmonary muſcles.—If I were, however, of a humour to ſee, or to ſhow the ſtate of my body, on the dark ſide, I might ſay,

'*Quid te exempta juvat ſpinis de pluribus una?*"

The nights are ſtill ſleepleſs, and the water riſes, though it does not riſe very faſt. Let us, however, rejoice in all the good that we have. The remiſſion of one diſeaſe will enable nature to combat the reſt.—The ſquills I have not neglected; for I have taken more than a hundred drops a day, and one day took two hundred and fifty, which, according to the popular equivalence of a drop to a grain, is more than half an ounce.—I thank you, dear Sir, for your attention to me has never failed. If the virtue of medicines could be enforced by the benevolence of the preſcriber, how ſoon ſhall I be well."

Auguſt 19. "The relaxation of the aſthma ſtill continues, yet I do not truſt it wholly to itſelf, and ſoothe it now and then with an opiate. I not only perform the perpetual act of reſpiration with leſs labour, but I can walk with fewer intervals of reſt, and with greater freedom of motion.—I never thought well of Dr. James's compounded medicines; his ingredients appeared to me ſometimes inefficacious and trifling, and ſometimes heterogeneous and deſtructive of each other. This preſcription exhibits a compoſition of about three hundred and thirty grains, in which there are four grains of emetick tartar, and ſix drops theabick tincture. He that writes thus, ſurely writes for ſhow. The baſis of his medicine is the gum ammoniacum, which dear Dr. Lawrence uſed to give, but of which I never ſaw any effect. We will, if you pleaſe,

pleaſe, let this medicine alone. The ſquills have every ſuffrage, and in the ſquills we will reſt for the preſent." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Auguſt 21. "The kindneſs which you ſhow by having me in your thoughts upon all occaſions, will, I hope, always fill my heart with gratitude. Be pleaſed to return my thanks to Sir George Raker, for the conſideration which he has beſtowed upon me. —Is this the balloon that has been ſo long expected, this balloon to which I ſubſcribed, but without payment? It is pity that philoſophers have been diſappointed, and ſhame that they have been cheated; but I know not well how to prevent either. Of this experiment I have read nothing; where was it exhibited? and who was the man that ran away with ſo much money?—Continue, dear Sir, to write often and more at a time; for none of your preſcriptions operate to their proper uſes more certainly than your letters operate as cordials."

Auguſt 26. I ſuffered you to eſcape laſt poſt without a letter, but you are not to expect ſuch indulgence very often, for I write not ſo much becauſe I have any thing to ſay, as becauſe I hope for an anſwer; and the vacancy of my life here makes a letter of great value.—I have here little company and little amuſement, and thus abandoned to the contemplation of my own miſeries, I am ſometimes gloomy and depreſſed; this too I reſiſt as I can, and find opium, I think, uſeful, but I ſeldom take more than one grain. Is not this ſtrange weather? Winter abſorbed the ſpring, and now autumn is come before we had ſummer. But let not our kindneſs for each other imitate the inconſtancy of the ſeaſons."

Sept. 2, "Mr. Windham has been here to ſee me, he came, I think, forty miles out of his

1784. Ætat. 75. way, and ſtaid about a day and a half, perhaps I make the time ſhorter than it was. Such converſation I ſhall not have again till I come back to the regions of literature, and there Windham is *inter ſtellas* * *Luna minores.*" He then mentions the effects of certain medicines, as taken, that "Nature is recovering its original powers. and the functions returning to their proper ſtate, God continue his mercies, and grant me to uſe them rightly."

Sept. 9. "Do you know the Duke and Ducheſs of Devonſhire? And have you ever ſeen Chatſworth? I was at Chatſworth on Monday: I had indeed ſeen it before, but never when its owners were at home; I was very kindly received, and honeſtly preſſed to ſtay, but I told them that a ſick man is not a fit inmate of a great houſe. But I hope to gain ſome time."

Sept. 11. "I think nothing grows worſe, but all rather better, except ſleep, and that of late has been at his old pranks. Laſt evening, I felt what I had not known for a long time, an inclination to walk for amuſement; I took a ſhort walk, and came back again neither breathleſs nor fatigued.—This has been a gloomy, frigid, ungenial ſummer, but of late it ſeems to mend; I hear the heat ſometimes mentioned, but I do not feel it.

'*Præterea minimus gelido jam in corpore ſanguis*
'*Febre calet ſola.*'——

* It is remarkable that ſo good a Latin ſcholar as Johnſon, ſhould have been ſo inattentive to the metre, as by miſtake to have written *ſtellas* inſtead of *ignes*.

I hope,

I hope, however, with good help, to find means of ſupporting a winter at home, and to hear and tell at the Club what is doing, and what ought to be doing in the world. I have no company here, and ſhall naturally come home hungry for converſation.—To wiſh you, dear Sir, more leiſure, would not be kind; but what leiſure you have, you muſt beſtow upon me." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Sept. 16. "I have now let you alone for a long time, having indeed little to ſay. You charge me ſomewhat unjuſtly with luxury. At Chatſworth, you ſhould remember, that I have eaten but once; and the Doctor, with whom, I live, follows a milk diet. I grow no fatter, though my ſtomach, if it be not diſturbed by phyſick, never fails me.—I now grow weary of ſolitude, and think of removing next week to Lichfield, a place of more ſociety, but otherwiſe of leſs convenience. When I am ſettled, I ſhall write again.—Of the hot weather that you mention, we have had in Derbyſhire very much, and for myſelf I ſeldom feel heat, and ſuppoſe that my frigidity is the effect of my diſtemper, a ſuppoſition which naturally leads me to hope that a hotter climate may be uſeful. But I hope to ſtand another Engliſh winter."

Lichfield, Sept. 29. "On one day I had three letters about the air-balloon: yours was far the beſt, and has enabled me to impart to my friends in the country an idea of this ſpecies of amuſement. In amuſement, mere amuſement, I am afraid it muſt end, for I do not find that its courſe can be directed ſo as that it ſhould ſerve any purpoſes of communication; and it can give no new intelligence of the ſtate of the air at different heights, till they have aſcended above the height of mountains, which they ſeem never likely to do.—I came hither on the 27th.

How

1784. Ætat. 75. How long I ſhall ſtay I have not determined. My dropſy is gone, and my aſthma much remitted, but I have felt myſelf a little declining theſe two days, or at leaſt to-day; but ſuch viciſſitudes muſt be expected. One day may be worſe than another; but this laſt month is far better than the former; if the next ſhould be as much better than this, I ſhall run about the town on my own legs."

October 6. "The fate of the balloon I do not much lament: to make new balloons is to repeat the jeſt again. We now know a method of mounting into the air, and, I think, are not likely to know more. The vehicles can ſerve no uſe till we can guide them; and they can gratify no curioſity till we can mount with them to greater heights than we can reach without, till we riſe above the tops of the higheſt mountains, which we have yet not done. We know the ſtate of the air in all its regions, to the top of Teneriffe, and therefore learn nothing from thoſe who navigate a balloon below the clouds. The firſt experiment, however, was bold, and deſerved applauſe and reward. But ſince it has been performed, and its event is known, I had rather now find a medicine that can eaſe an aſthma."

October 25. "You write to me with a zeal that animates, and a tenderneſs that melts me. I am not afraid of a journey to London, or a reſidence in it. I came down with little fatigue, and am now not weaker. In the ſmoky atmoſphere I was delivered from the dropſy, which I conſider as the original and radical diſeaſe. The town is my element *; there are my friends, there

‡ His love of England continually appears. Once upon reading that line in the curious epitaph quoted in the "Spectator,"

"Born

there are my books, to which I have not yet bidden farewell, and there are my amuſements. Sir Joſhua told me long ago, that my vocation was to publick life, and I hope ſtill to keep my ſtation, till GOD ſhall bid me *Go in peace.*" 1784. Ætat. 75.

To Mr. HOOLE. Aſhbourne, Aug. 7. "Since I was here, I have two little letters from you, and have not had the gratitude to write. But every man is moſt free with his beſt friends, becauſe he does not ſuppoſe that they can ſuſpect him of intentional incivility.—One reaſon for my omiſſion is, that being in a place to which you are wholly a ſtranger, I have no topics of correſpondence. Had you any knowledge of Aſhbourne men, who, being laſt week condemned at Derby to be hanged for a robbery, went and hanged themſelves in their cell? But this, however, tho' it may ſupply us with talk, is nothing to you.—Your kindneſs, I know, would make you glad to hear ſome good of me, but I have not much good to tell; if I grow not worſe, it is all that I can ſay.—I hope Mrs. Hoole receives more help from her migration. Make her my compliments, and write again to, dear Sir, your affectionate ſervant."

Aug. 13. "I thank you for your affectionate letter. I hope we ſhall both be the better for each other's friendſhip, and I hope we ſhall not very quickly be parted.—Tell Mr. Nichols, that I ſhall be glad of his correſpondence, when his buſineſs allows him a little remiſſion; though to wiſh him leſs buſineſs, that I may have more pleaſure, would be too ſelfiſh.—To pay for

"Born in New-England, did in London die;"

he laughed and ſaid, "I do not wonder at this. It would have been ſtrange, if born in London, he had died in New-England."

ſeats

1784. Ætat. 75. ſeats at the balloon is not very neceſſary, becauſe in leſs than a minute, they who gaze at a mile's diſtance will ſee all that can be ſeen. About the wings, I am of your mind; they cannot at all aſſiſt it, nor I think regulate its motion.—I am now grown ſomewhat eaſier in my body, but my mind is ſometimes depreſſed.—About the Club I am in no great pain. The forfeitures go on, and the houſe, I hear, is improved for our future meetings. I hope we ſhall meet often, and ſit long."

Sept. 4. "Your letter was, indeed, long in coming, but it was very welcome. Our acquaintance has now ſubſiſted long, and our recollection of each other involves a great ſpace, and many little occurrences, which melt the thoughts to tenderneſs. Write to me, therefore, as frequently as you can.—I hear from Dr. Brocklesby and Mr. Ryland, that the Club is not crouded. I hope we ſhall enliven it when winter brings us together."

To Dr. BURNEY. Auguſt 2. "The weather, you know, has not been balmy; I am now reduced to think, and am at laſt content to talk of the weather. Pride muſt have a fall *.—I have loſt dear Mr. Allen, and wherever I turn,

* There was no information for which Dr. Johnſon was leſs grateful than for that which concerned the weather. It was in alluſion to his impatience with thoſe who were reduced to keep converſation alive by obſervations on the weather, that he applied the old proverb to himſelf. If any one of his intimate acquaintance told him it was hot or cold, wet or dry, windy or calm, he would ſtop them, by ſaying, "Poh! poh! you are telling us that of which none but men in a mine or a dungeon can be ignorant. Let us bear with patience, or enjoy in quiet, elementary changes, whether for the better or the worſe, as they are never ſecrets." BURNEY.

he

the dead or the dying meet my notice, and force my attention upon miſery and mortality. Mrs. Burney's eſcape from ſo much danger, and her eaſe after ſo much pain, throws, however, ſome radiance of hope upon the gloomy proſpect. May her recovery be perfect, and her continuance long.—I ſtruggle hard for life. I take phyſic, and take air; my friend's chariot is always ready. We have run this morning twenty-four miles, and could run forty-eight more. *But who can run the race for death?*" 1784. Ætat. 75.

Sept. 4. [Concerning a private tranſaction, in which his opinion was aſked, and after giving it he makes the following reflections, which are applicable on other occaſions.] "Nothing deſerves more compaſſion than wrong conduct with good meaning; than loſs or obloquy ſuffered by one who, as he is conſcious only of good intentions, wonders why he loſes that kindneſs which he wiſhes to preſerve; and not knowing his own fault, if, as may ſometimes happen, nobody will tell him, goes on to offend by his endeavours to pleaſe.—I am delighted by finding that our opinions are the ſame.—You will do me a real kindneſs by continuing to write. A poſt-day has now been long a day of recreation."

Nov. 1. "Our correſpondence pauſed for want of topicks. I had ſaid what I had to ſay on the matter propoſed to my conſideration; and nothing remained but to tell you, that I waked or ſlept; that I was more or leſs ſick, I drew my thoughts in upon myſelf, and ſuppoſed yours employed upon your book.—That your book has been delayed I am glad, ſince you have gained an opportunity of being more exact.—Of the caution neceſſary in adjuſting narratives there is no end. Some tell what they do not knows that

1784. Ætat. 75. that they may not ſeem ignorant, and other, from mere indifference about truth. All truth is not, indeed, of equal importance; but, if little violations are allowed, every violation will in time be thought little; and a writer ſhould keep himſelf vigilantly on his guard againſt the firſt temptations to negligence or ſupineſs.—I had ceaſed to write, becauſe reſpecting you I had no more to ſay, and reſpecting myſelf could ſay but little good. I cannot boaſt of advancement, and in caſes of convaleſcence it may be ſaid, with few exceptions, *non progredi, eſt regredi.* I hope I may be expected.—My great difficulty was with my ſweet Fanny, who, by her artifice of inſerting her letter in yours, had given me a precept of frugality which I was not at liberty to neglect; and I know not who were in town under whoſe cover I could ſend my letter. I rejoice to hear that you are all ſo well, and have a delight particularly ſympathetick in the recovery of Mrs. Burney.

To Mr. LANGTON, Aug. 25. "The kindneſs of your laſt letter, and my omiſſion to anſwer it, begins to give you, even in my opinion, a right to recriminate, and to charge me with forgetfulneſs of the abſent. I will therefore delay no longer to give an account of myſelf, and wiſh I could relate what would pleaſe either myſelf or my friend.—On July 13, I left London, partly in hope of help from new air and change of place, and partly excited by the ſick man's impatience of the preſent. I got to Lichfield in a ſtage vehicle, with very little fatigue in two days, and had the conſolation to find, that ſince my laſt viſit my three old acquaintance are all dead.—July 20, I went to Aſhbourne, where I have been till now; the houſe in which we live is repairing. I live in too much

much ſolitude, and am often deeply dejected: I wiſh we were nearer, and rejoice in your removal to London. A friend, at once cheerful and ſerious, is a great acquiſition. Let us not neglect one another for the little time which Providence allows us to hope.—Of my health I cannot tell you, what my wiſhes perſuaded me to expect, that it is much improved by the ſeaſon or by remedies. I am ſleepleſs; my legs grow weary with a very few ſteps, and the water breaks its boundaries in ſome degree. The aſthma, however, has remitted; my breath is ſtill much obſtructed, but is more free than it was. Nights of watchfulneſs produce torpid days; I read very little, though I am alone; for I am tempted to ſupply in the day what I loſt in bed.—This is my hiſtory, like all other hiſtories, a narrative of miſery. Yet I am ſo much better than in the beginning of the year, that I ought to be aſhamed of complaining. I now ſit and write with very little ſenſibility of pain or weakneſs; but when I riſe, I ſhall find my legs betraying me.—Of the money which you mentioned I have no inmmediate need; keep it, however, for me, unleſs ſome exigence requires it. Your papers I will ſhew you certainly when you would ſee them, but I am a little angry at you for not keeping minutes of your own *acceptum et expenſum*, and think a little time might be ſpared from Ariſtophanes, for the *res familiares*. Forgive me, for I mean well.—I hope, dear Sir, that you and Lady Rothes, and all the young people, too many to enumerate, are well and happy. God bleſs you all." 1784. Ætat. 75.

To Mr. Windham, Auguſt. "The tenderneſs with which you have been pleaſed to treat me, through my long illneſs, neither health nor ſickneſs can I hope make me forget; and you

1784. Ætat. 75. you are not to ſuppoſe, that after we parted you were no longer in my mind. But what can a ſick man ſay, but that he is ſick? His thoughts are neceſſarily concentrated in himſelf; he neither receives nor can give delight; his enquiries are after alleviations of pain, and his efforts are to catch ſome momentary comfort. Though I am now in the neighbourhood of the Peak, you muſt expect no account of its wonders, of its hills, its waters, its caverns, or its mines; but I will tell you, dear Sir, what I hope you will not hear with leſs ſatisfaction, that for about a week paſt my aſthma has been leſs afflictive."

October 2. "I believe you have been long enough acquainted with the *phænomena* of ſickneſs, not to be ſurprized that a ſick man wiſhes to be where he is not, and where it appears to every body but himſelf that he might eaſily be, without having the reſolution to remove. I thought Aſhbourne a ſolitary place, but did not come hither till laſt Monday.—I have here more company, but my health has for this laſt week not advanced; and in the langour of diſeaſe how little can be done? Whither or when ſhall I make my next remove, I cannot tell; but I entreat you, dear Sir, to let me know, from time to time, where you may be found, for your reſidence is a very powerful attractive to, Sir, your moſt humble ſervant."

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM GERARD HAMILTON.

"DEAR SIR,

"CONSIDERING what reaſon you gave me in the ſpring to conclude that you took part in whatever good or evil might befal me, I ought

ought not to have omitted ſo long the account which I am now about to give you.—My diſeaſes are an aſthma and a dropſy, and, what is leſs curable, ſeventy-five. Of the dropſy, in the beginning of the ſummer, or in the ſpring, I recovered to a degree which ſtruck with wonder both me and my phyſicians: the aſthma now is likewiſe, for a time, very much relieved. I went to Oxford, where the aſthma was very tyrannical, and the dropſy began again to threaten me, but ſeaſonable phyſick ſtopped the inundation: I then returned to London, and in July took a reſolution to viſit Staffordſhire and Derbyſhire, where I am yet ſtruggling with my diſeaſes. The dropſy made another attack, and was not eaſily ejected, but at laſt gave way. The aſthma ſuddenly remitted in bed, on the 13th of Auguſt, and, though now very oppreſſive, is, I think, ſtill ſomething gentler than it was before the remiſſion. My limbs are miſerably debilitated, and my nights are ſleepleſs and tedious.—When you read this, dear Sir, you are not ſorry that I wrote no ſooner. I will not prolong my complaints. I hope ſtill to ſee you *in a happier hour*, to talk over what we have often talked, and perhaps to find new topicks of merriment, or new incitements to curioſity. I am dear Sir, &c.

1784. Ætat. 75.

SAM. JOHNSON."

" Lichfield, Oct. 20, 1784.

To JOHN PARADISE, *Eſq.*

" DEAR SIR,

" THOUGH in all my ſummer's excurſion I have given you no account of myſelf, I hope you think better of me than to imagine it poſſible for

1784. Ætat. 75. for me to forget you, whoſe kindneſs to me has been too great and too conſtant not to have made its impreſſion on a harder breaſt than mine.—Silence is not very culpable when nothing pleaſing is ſuppreſſed. It would have alleviated none of your complaints to have read my viciſſitudes of evil. I have ſtruggled hard with very formidable and obſtinate maladies; and though I cannot talk of health, think all praiſe due to my Creator and Preſerver for the continuance of my life. The dropſy has made two attacks, and has given way to medicine; the aſthma is very oppreſſive, but that has likewiſe once remitted. I am very weak, and very ſleepleſs; but it is time to conclude the tale of miſery.—I hope, dear Sir, that you grow better, for you have likewiſe your ſhare of human evil, and that your lady and the young charmers are well. I am, dear Sir, &c.

SAM. JOHNSON."

"Lichfield, Oct 20, 1784.

To Mr. GEORGE NICOLL *.

"DEAR SIR,

"SINCE we parted I have been much oppreſſed by my aſthma, but it has lately been leſs laborious. When I ſit I am almoſt at eaſe, and I can walk, though yet very little, with leſs difficulty for this week paſt than before. I hope I ſhall again enjoy my friends, and that you and I ſhall have a little more literary converſation. My friend is ſick himſelf, and the reciprocation of complaints and groans affords not much of either pleaſure or inſtruction. What we have

* Bookſeller to his Majeſty.

not

not at home this town does not ſupply, and I ſhall be glad of a little imported intelligence, and hope that you will beſtow now and then a little time on the relief and entertainment of, Sir, yours, &c. 1784. Ætat. 75.

SAM. JOHNSON."

" Aſhbourne, Auguſt 19, 1784.

To Mr. CRUIKSHANK.

" DEAR SIR,

" DO not ſuppoſe that I forget you; I hope I ſhall never be accuſed of forgetting my benefactors. I had, till lately, nothing to write but complaints upon complaints, of miſeries upon miſeries, but within this fortnight I have received great relief.—Have your Lectures any vacation? If you are releaſed from the neceſſity of daily ſtudy, you may find time for a letter to me.—[In this letter he ſtates the particulars of his caſe.]—In return for this account for my health, let me have a good account of yours, and of your proſperity in all your undertakings, I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

SAM. JOHNSON."

" Aſhbourne, Sept. 4, 1784.

To MR. THOMAS DAVIES, Auguſt 14. " The tenderneſs with which you always treat me, makes me culpable in my own eyes for having omitted to write in ſo long a ſeparation; I had, indeed, nothing to ſay that you could wiſh to hear. All has been hitherto miſery accumulated upon miſery, diſeaſe corroborating diſeaſe, till yeſterday my aſthma was perceptibly and unexpectedly mitigated. I am much comforted with this ſhort relief, and am willing to flatter myſelf that

1784. Ætat. 75. that it may continue and improve. I have at preſent, ſuch a degree of eaſe, as not only may admit the comforts, but the duties of life. Make my compliments to Mrs. Davies.—Poor dear Allen, he was a good man."

To Sir Joshua Reynolds, Auguſt 19. "Having had ſince our ſeparation, little to ſay that could pleaſe you or myſelf by ſaying, I have not been laviſh of uſeleſs letters; but I flatter myſelf that you will partake of the pleaſure with which I can now tell you, that about a week ago, I felt ſuddenly a ſenſible remiſſion of my aſthma, and conſequently a greater lightneſs of action and motion. Of this grateful alleviation I know not the cauſe, nor dare depend upon its continuance, but while it laſts, I endeavour to enjoy it, and am deſirous of communicating while it laſts, my pleaſure to my friends.——Hitherto, dear Sir, I had written before the poſt, which ſtays in this town but a little while, brought me your letter. Mr. Davies ſeems to have repreſented my little tendency to recovery in terms too ſplendid. I am ſtill reſtleſs, ſtill weak, ſtill watry, the aſthma is leſs oppreſſive.—Poor Ramſay*! On which ſide ſoever I turn, mortality preſents its formidable frown. I left three old friends at Lichfield, when I was laſt there, and now found them all dead. I no ſooner loſe ſight of dear Allen, than I am told I ſhall ſee him no more. That we muſt all die, we always knew; I wiſh I had ſooner remembered it. Do not think me intruſive or importunate, if I now call, dear Sir, on you to remember it."

Sept. 2. "I ſtill continue, by God's mercy, to mend. My breath is eaſier, my nights are quieter, and my legs are leſs in bulk, and ſtronger

* Allen Ramſay, Eſq. painter to his Majeſty, who died about this time; much regretted by his friends.

in

in uſe. I have, however, yet a great deal to overcome, before I can yet attain even an old man's health. Write, do write to me now and then; we are now old acquaintance, and perhaps few people have lived ſo much and ſo long together, with leſs cauſe of complaint on either ſide. The retroſpection of this is very pleaſant, and I hope we ſhall never think on each other with leſs kindneſs." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Sept. 18. "I flattered myſelf that this week would have given me a letter from you, but direct your next to Lichfield.—I think, and I hope, am ſure, that I ſtill grow better; I have ſometimes good nights; but am ſtill in my legs weak, but ſo much mended, that I go to Lichfield in hope of being able to pay my viſits on foot, for there are no coaches.—I have three letters this day, all about the balloon, I could have been content with one. Do not write about the balloon whatever elſe you may think proper to ſay."

To Mr. John Nichols. Lichfield, Oct. 20. "When you were here, you were pleaſed, as I am told, to think my abſence an inconvenience. I ſhould certainly have been very glad to give ſo ſkilful a lover of antiquities any information about my native place, of which, however, I know not much, and have reaſon to believe that not much is known.—Though I have not given you any amuſement, I have received amuſement from you. At Aſhbourne, where I had very little company, I had the luck to borrow 'Mr. Bowyer's Life;' a book ſo full of contemporary hiſtory, that a literary man muſt find ſome of his old friends. I thought that I could now and then have told you ſome hints worth your notice; and perhaps we may talk a life over. I hope we ſhall be much together;

1784. Ætat. 75. you must now be to me what you were before, and what dear Mr. Allen was, besides. He was taken unexpectedly away, but I think he was a very good man.—I have made very little progress in recovery. I am very weak, and very sleepless; but I live on and hope."

This various mass of correspondence, which I have thus brought together, is valuable both as an addition to the store which the publick already has of Johnson's writings, and as exhibiting a genuine and noble specimen of vigour and vivacity of mind, which neither age nor sickness could impair or diminish.

It may be observed, that his writing in every way, whether for the publick, or privately to his friends, was by fits and starts; for we see frequently, that a number of letters are written on the same day. When he had once overcome his aversion to begin, he was, I suppose, desirous to go on in order to relieve his mind from the uneasy reflection of delaying what he ought to do.

While in the country, notwithstanding the accumulation of illness which he endured, his mind did not lose its powers. He translated an Ode of Horace, which is printed in his Works, and composed several prayers. I shall insert one of them, which is so wise and energetick, so philosophical and so pious, that I doubt not of its affording consolation to many a sincere Christian, when in a state of mind to which I believe the best are sometimes liable *.

And

* *Against inquisitive and perplexing thoughts.* "O Lord, my Maker and Protector, who hast graciously sent me into this world to work out my salvation, enable me to drive from me all such unquiet and perplexing thoughts as may mislead or hinder me in the practice of those duties which Thou hast required. When I behold the works of thy hands,

And here I am enabled fully to refute a very unjuſt reflection both againſt Dr. Johnſon, and his faithful ſervant, Mr. Francis Barber, by Sir John Hawkins, as if both of them had been culpable of neglect towards a perſon of the name of Heeley, whom Sir John chooſes to call a *relation* of Dr. Johnſon's. The fact is, that Mr. Heeley was not his relation; he had indeed been married to one of his couſins, but ſhe had died without having any children, and he had married another woman, ſo that even the ſlight connection which there once had been by alliance was diſſolved. Dr. Johnſon, who had ſhewn very great liberality to this man while his firſt wife was alive, as had appeared in a former part of this work, was humane and charitable enough to continue his bounty to him occaſionally; but ſurely there was no ſtrong call of duty upon him or upon his legatee, to do more. The following letter, obligingly communicated to me by Mr. Andrew Strahan, will confirm what I have ſtated: 1784. Ætat. 75.

hands, and conſider the courſe of thy providence. give me grace always to remember that thy thoughts are not my thoughts, nor thy ways my ways. And while it ſhall pleaſe Thee to continue me in this world, where much is to be done, and little to be known teach me, by thy Holy Spirit, to withdraw my mind from unprofitable and dangerous enquiries, from difficulties vainly curious, and doubts impoſſible to be ſolved. Let me rejoice in the light which Thou haſt imparted, let me ſerve Thee with active zeal and humble confidence, and wait with patient expectation for the time in which the ſoul which Thou receiveſt ſhall be ſatisfied with knowledge. Grant this, O, LORD, for JESUS CHRIST's ſake. Amen."

1784. Ætat. 75. *To Mr.* HEELY, *No. 5, in Pye-ſtreet, Weſtminſter.*

" SIR,

" AS neceſſity obliges you to call ſo ſoon again upon me, you ſhould at leaſt have told the ſmalleſt ſum that will ſupply your want; you cannot ſuppoſe that I have much to ſpare. Two guineas is as much as you ought to be behind with your creditor.—If you wait on Mr. Strahan, in New-ſtreet, Fetter-lane, or in his abſence, on Mr. Andrew Strahan, ſhow this, by which they are entreated to advance you two guineas, and to keep this as a voucher. I am, Sir, your humble ſervant,

SAM. JOHNSON."

" Aſhbourne, Aug. 12, 1784.

Indeed it is very neceſſary to keep in mind that Sir John Hawkins has unaccountably viewed Johnſon's character and conduct in almoſt every particular with an unhappy prejudice *.

We

* I ſhall add one inſtance only to thoſe on which I have thought it incumbent on me to obſerve. Talking of Mr. Garrick's having ſignified his willingneſs to let Johnſon have the loan of any of his books to aſſiſt him in his edition of Shakſpeare; Sir John ſays (page 444.) " Mr. Garrick knew not what riſque he ran by this offer. Johnſon had ſo ſtrange a forgetfulneſs of obligations of this ſort, that few who lent him books ever ſaw them again." This ſurely conveys a moſt unfavourable inſinuation, and has been ſo underſtood. Sir John mentions the ſingle caſe of a curious edition of Politian, which he tells us, " appeared to belong to Pembroke-College, and which, probably had been conſidered by Johnſon as his own, for upwards of fifty years." Would it not be fairer to conſider this as an inadvertence, and draw no general inference? The truth is, that Johnſon was ſo attentive, that in one of his manuſcripts in my poſſeſſion, he has marked in two columns books borrowed, and books lent.

In

We now behold Johnſon for the laſt time, in his native city, for which he ever retained a warm affection, and which by a ſudden apoſtrophe under the word *Lich*, he introduces with reverence, into his immortal work THE ENGLISH DICTIONARY—*Salve magna parens* * *!* While here, he felt the revival of all the tenderneſs of filial affection, an inſtance of which appeared in his ordering the grave-ſtone and inſcription, over Elizabeth Blaney, to be ſubſtantially and carefully renewed. 1784. Ætat. 75.

In Sir John Hawkins's compilation, there are, however, ſome paſſages concerning Johnſon which have unqueſtionable merit. One of them I ſhall tranſcribe, in juſtice to a writer whom I have had too much occaſion to cenſure, and to ſhow my fairneſs as the biographer of my illuſtrious friend: "There was wanting in his conduct and behaviour, that dignity which reſults from a regular and orderly courſe of action, and by an irreſiſtible power commands eſteem. He could not be ſaid to be a ſtayed man, nor ſo to have adjuſted in his mind the balance of reaſon and paſſion, as to give occaſion to ſay what may be obſerved of ſome men, that all they do is juſt, fit, and right."

* The following circumſtance, mutually to the honour of Johnſon and the corporation of his native city, has been communicated to me by the Reverend Dr. Vyſe, from the Town-Clerk: "Mr. Simpſon has now before him, a record of the reſpect and veneration which the Corporation of Lichfield, in the year 1767, had for the merits and learning of Dr. Johnſon. His father built the corner houſe in the market-place, the two fronts of which, towards Market and Broad-market-ſtreet, ſtood upon the waſte land of the Corporation, under a forty years leaſe, which was then expired. On the 15th of Auguſt, 1767, at a common-hall of the bailiffs and citizens, it was ordered (and that without any ſolicitation) that a leaſe ſhould be granted to Samuel Johnſon, Doctor of Laws, of the incroachments at his houſe, for the term of ninety-nine years, at the old rent which was five ſhillings. Of which, as Town-Clerk, Mr. Simpſon had the honour and pleaſure of informing him, and that he was deſired to accept it, without paying any fine on the occaſion, which leaſe was afterwards granted, and the Doctor died poſſeſſed of this property."

To

1784. Ætat. 75. To Mr. Henry White, a young clergyman, with whom he now formed an intimacy, ſo as to talk to him with great freedom, he mentioned that he could not in general accuſe himſelf of having been an undutiful ſon. "Once, indeed (ſaid he) I was diſobedient; I refuſed to attend my father to Uttoxeter-market. Pride was the ſource of that refuſal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago, I deſired to atone for this fault; I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and ſtood for a conſiderable time bare-headed in the rain, on the ſpot where my father's ſtall uſed to ſtand. In contrition I ſtood, and I hope the pennance was expiatory."

"I told him (ſays Miſs Seward) in one of my lateſt viſits to him, of a wonderful learned pig, which I had ſeen at Nottingham; and which did all that we have obſerved exhibited by dogs and horſes. The ſubject amuſed him. 'Then (ſaid he) the pigs are a race unjuſtly calumniated. *Pig* has, it ſeems, *not* been wanting to *man*, but *man* to *pig*. We do not allow *time* for his education, we kill him at a year old.' Mr. Henry White, who was preſent, obſerved that if this inſtance had happened in or before Pope's time, he would not have been juſtified in inſtancing the ſwine as the loweſt degree of groveling inſtinct. Doctor Johnſon ſeemed pleaſed with the obſervation, while the perſon who made it proceeded to remark, that great torture muſt have been employed, ere the indocility of the animal could have been ſubdued.—'Certainly (ſaid the Doctor) but (turning to me); how old is your pig?" I told him three years old. 'Then (ſaid he) the pig has no cauſe to complain; he would have been killed the firſt year if he had not

not been *educated,* and protracted exiſtence is a good recompence for very conſiderable degrees of torture." 1784. Ætat. 75.

As Johnſon had now very faint hopes of recovery, and as Mrs. Thrale was no longer devoted to him, it might have been ſuppoſed that he would naturally have choſen to remain in the comfortable houſe of his beloved wife's daughter, and end his life where he began it. But there was in him an animated and lofty ſpirit *, and however complicated diſeaſes might depreſs ordinary mortals, all who ſaw him, beheld and acknowledged the *invictum animum Catonis.* Such was his intellectual ardour even at this time, that he ſaid to one friend, " Sir, I look upon every day to be loſt in which I do not make a new acquaintance." And to another, when talking of his illneſs, " I will be conquered; I will not capitulate." And ſuch was his love of London, ſo high a reliſh had he of its magnificent extent, and variety of intellectual entertainment, that he languiſhed when abſent from it, his mind having become quite luxurious from the long habit of enjoying the metropolis; and therefore although at Lichfield, ſurrounded with friends who loved and revered him, and for whom he had a very ſincere affection, he ſtill found that ſuch converſation as London affords, could be found no where elſe. Theſe feelings, joined probably to ſome flatter-

* Mr. Burke ſuggeſted to me as applicable to Johnſon, what Cicero, in his *Cato Major,* ſays of *Appius,* " *Intentum enim animum tanquam habebat, nec langueſcens ſuccumbebat ſenectuti*;" repeating at the ſame time, the following noble words in the ſame paſſage: " *Ita enim ſenectus honeſta eſt ſi ſe ipſa defendit, ſi jus ſuum retinet, ſi nemini emancipata eſt, ſi uſque ad extremum vitæ ſpiritum vindicet jus ſuum.*"

ing

1784. Ætat. 75. ing hopes of aid, from the eminent phyſicians and ſurgeons in London, who kindly and generouſly attended him without accepting of fees, made him reſolve to return to the capital.

From Lichfield he came to Birmingham, where he paſſed a few days with his worthy old ſchoolfellow, Mr. Hector, who thus writes to me: "He was very ſolicitous with me to recollect ſome of our moſt early tranſactions, and tranſmit them to him, for I perceived nothing gave him greater pleaſure than calling to mind thoſe days of our innocence. I complied with his requeſt, and he only received them a few days before his death. I have tranſcribed for your inſpection, exactly the minutes I wrote to him." This paper having been found in his repoſitories after his death, Sir John Hawkins has inſerted it entire, and I have made occaſional uſe of it, and other communications from Mr. Hector, in the courſe of this work. I have both viſited and correſponded with him ſince Dr. Johnſon's death, and by aſking a great variety of particulars have obtained additional information. I followed the ſame mode with the Reverend Dr. Taylor, in whoſe preſence I wrote down a good deal of what he could tell; and he, at my requeſt, ſigned his name, to give it authenticity. It is very rare to find any perſon who is able to give a diſtinct account of the life even of one whom he has known intimately, without queſtions being put to them. My friend, Dr. Kippis, has told me, that on this account it is a practice with him to draw out a biographical catechiſm.

Johnſon then proceeded to Oxford, where he was again kindly received by Dr. Adams, who was pleaſed to give the following account in one of his letters (17th Feb. 1785): "His laſt viſit was,

was, I believe, to my houſe, which he left after a ſtay of four or five days. We had much ſerious talk together, for which I ought to be the better as long as I live. You will remember ſome diſcourſe which we had in the ſummer upon the ſubject of prayer, and the difficulty of this ſort of compoſition. He reminded me of this, and of my having wiſhed him to try his hand, and to give us a ſpecimen of the ſtyle and manner that he approved. He added, that he was now in a right frame of mind, and as he could not poſſibly employ his time better, he would in earneſt ſet about it. But I find upon enquiry, that no papers of this ſort were left behind him, except a few ſhort ejaculatory forms ſuitable to his preſent ſituation." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Dr. Adams had not then received accurate information on this ſubject; for it has ſince appeared that various prayers had been compoſed by him at different periods, which intermingled with pious reſolutions, and ſome ſhort notes of his life, were entitled by him "Prayers and Meditations," and have in purſuance of his earneſt requiſition in the hopes of doing good, been publiſhed, with a judicious well-written Preface, by the Rev. Mr. Strahan, to whom he delivered them. This admirable collection, to which I have frequently referred in the courſe of this work, evinces, beyond all his compoſitions for the publick, and all the eulogies of his friends and admirers, the ſincere virtue and piety of Johnſon. It proves with unqueſtionable authenticity, that amidſt all his conſtitutional infirmities, his earneſtneſs to conform his practice to the precepts of Chriſtianity was unceaſing, and that he habitually endeavoured to refer every tranſaction of his life to the will of the Supreme Being.

He

1784. Ætat. 75. He arrived in London on the 16th of November, and next day ſent to Dr. Burney, the following note, which I inſert as the laſt token of his remembrance of this ingenious and amiable man, and as another of the many proofs of the tenderneſs and benignity of his heart.

"Mr. JOHNSON, who came home laſt night, ſends his reſpects to dear Dr. Burney, and all the dear Burney's little and great."

To Mr. HECTOR, *in Birmingham.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I DID not reach Oxford, until Friday morning, and then I ſent Francis to ſee the balloon fly, but could not go myſelf. I ſtaid at Oxford 'till Tueſday, and then came in the common vehicle eaſily to London. I am as I was, and having ſeen Dr. Brockleſby, am to ply the ſquills; but whatever be their efficacy, this world muſt ſoon paſs away. Let us think ſeriouſly on our duty.—I ſend my kindeſt reſpects to dear Mrs. Careleſs; let me have the prayers of both. We have all lived long, and muſt ſoon part. GOD have mercy on us, for the ſake of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. Amen. I am. &c.

SAM. JOHNSON."

"London, Nov. 17, 1784.

His correſpondence with me after his letter on the ſubject of my ſettling in London, ſhall now ſo far as is proper, be produced in one ſeries.

July 26, he wrote to me from Aſhbourne; "On the 14th I came from Lichfield, and found every body glad enough to ſee me. On the 20th, I came

I came hither, and found a houſe half built, of very uncomfortable appearance, but my own room has not been altered. That a man worn with diſeaſes, in his ſeventy-ſecond or third year, ſhould condemn part of his remaining life to paſs among ruins and rubbiſh, and that no inconſiderable part, appears to me very ſtrange. I know that your kindneſs makes you impatient to know the ſtate of my health, in which I cannot boaſt of much improvement. I came through the journey without much inconvenience, but when I attempt ſelf-motion I find my legs weak, and my breath very ſhort; this day I have been much diſordered. I have no company; the Doctor is buſy in his fields, and goes to bed at nine, and his whole ſyſtem is ſo different from mine, that we ſeem formed for different elements; I have, therefore, all my amuſement to ſeek within myſelf." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Having written to him in bad ſpirits, a letter filled with dejection and fretfulneſs, and at the ſame time expreſſing anxious apprehenſions concerning him, on account of a dream which had diſturbed me; his anſwer was chiefly in terms of reproach, for a ſuppoſed charge of "affecting diſcontent, and indulging the vanity of complaint." It however proceeded, "Write to me often, and write like a man. I conſider your fidelity and tenderneſs as a great part of the comforts which are yet left me, and ſincerely wiſh we could be nearer to each other.—* * * * * * * *.—My dear friend, life is very ſhort and very uncertain; let us ſpend it as well as we can.—My worthy neighbour, Allen, is dead. Love me as well as you can. Pay my reſpects to dear Mrs. Boſwell.—Nothing ailed me at that time; let you ſuperſtition at laſt have an end."

Feeling

1784. Ætat. 75. Feeling very ſoon, that the manner in which he had written might hurt me, he in two days after, July 28, wrote to me again, giving me an account of his ſufferings, after which follows: "Before this letter you will have had one which I hope you will not take amiſs; for it contains only truth, and that truth kindly intended. * * * * * * *. *Spartam quam nactus es orna*; make the moſt and beſt of your lot, and compare yourſelf not with the few that are above you, but with the multitudes which are below you. * * * * * * *. Go ſteadily forward with lawful buſineſs or honeſt diverſions. 'Be (as Temple ſays of the Dutchmen) *well when you are not ill, and pleaſed when you are not angry.*' * * * * * * *. This may ſeem but an ill return for your tenderneſs; but I mean it well, for I love you with great ardour and ſincerity. Pay my reſpects to dear Mrs. Boſwell, and teach the young ones to love me."

I was unfortunately ſo much indiſpoſed during a conſiderable part of the year, that it was not, or at leaſt I thought it was not, in my power to write to my illuſtrious friend as formerly, or with expreſſing ſuch complaints as offended him. Having conjured him not to do me the injuſtice of charging me with affectation, I was with much regret long ſilent. His laſt letter to me then came and affected me very tenderly.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Eſq.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I HAVE this ſummer ſometimes amended and ſometimes relapſed, but upon the whole, have loſt ground very much. My legs are extremely weak, and my breath very ſhort, and the water is now encreaſing upon me. In this uncomfortable

uncomfortable ſtate your letters uſed to relieve; what is the reaſon that I have them no longer? Are you ſick, or are you ſullen? Whatever be the reaſon, if it be leſs than neceſſity, drive it away, and of the ſhort life that we have, make the beſt uſe for yourſelf and for your friends. * * * * * *. I am ſometimes afraid that your omiſſion to write has ſome real cauſe, and ſhall be glad to know that you are not ſick, and that nothing ill has befallen dear Mrs. Boſwell, or any of your family. 1784. Ætat. 75.

"I am, Sir, your, &c.

SAM. JOHNSON.'

"Lichfield, Nov. 3, 1784.

Yet it was not a little painful to me to find, that in a paragraph of this letter, which I have omitted, he ſtill perſevered in arraigning me as before, which was ſtrange in him who had ſo much experience of what I ſuffered. I however wrote to him two as kind letters as I could; the laſt of which came too late to be read by him, for his illneſs encreaſed more rapidly upon him than I had apprehended; but I had the conſolation of being informed that he ſpoke of me on his death-bed, with affection, and I look forward with humble hope of renewing our friendſhip in a better world.

I now relieve the readers of this work from any farther perſonal notice of its authour, who if he ſhould be thought to have intruded himſelf too much upon their attention, requeſts them to conſider the peculiar plan of his biographical undertaking.

Soon after Johnſon's return to the metropolis, both the aſthma and dropſy became more violent and diſtreſsful. He had for ſome time kept a journal in Latin, of the ſtate of his illneſs, and the

1784. Ætat. 75. the remedies which he uſed, under the title of *Ægri Ephemeris*, which he began on the 6th of July, but continued it no longer than the 8th of November; finding, I ſuppoſe, that it was a mournful and unavailing regiſter. It is in my poſſeſſion; and it was written with great care and accuracy.

Still his love of literature* did not fail. He drew out and gave to his friend Mr. John Nichols, what

* It is truly wonderful to conſider the extent and conſtancy of Johnſon's literary ardour, notwithſtanding the melancholy which clouded and embittered his exiſtence. Beſides the numerous and various works which he executed, he had at different times formed ſchemes of a great many more, of which the following catalogue was given by him to Mr. Langton, and by that gentleman preſented to his Majeſty.

"DIVINITY.

"A ſmall book of precepts and directions for piety; the hint taken from the directions in Morton's exerciſe.

PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY, and LITERATURE in general.

"Hiſtory of Criticiſm, as it relates to judging of authours, from Ariſtotle to the preſent age. An account of the riſe and improvements of that art; and of the different opinions of authours, ancient and modern.

"Tranſlation of the Hiſtory of Herodian.

"New edition of Fairfax's Tranſlation of Taſſo, with notes, gloſſary, &c.

"Chaucer, a new edition of him, from manuſcripts and old editions, with various readings, conjectures, remarks on his language, and the changes it had undergone from the earlieſt times to his age, and from his to the preſent: with notes explanatory of cuſtoms, &c. and references to Boccace, and other authours from whom he has borrowed, with an account of the liberties he has taken in telling the ſtories; his life, and an exact etymological gloſſary.

"Ariſtotle's Rhetorick, a tranſlation of it into Engliſh.

"A Collection

what perhaps he alone could have done, a liſt of the authours of the Univerſal Hiſtory, mentioning their 1784. Ætat. 75.

" A Collection of Letters tranſlated from the modern writers, with ſome account of the ſeveral authours.

" Oldham's Poems, with notes hiſtorical and critical.

" Roſcommon's Poems, with notes.

" Lives of the Philoſophers, written with a polite air, in ſuch a manner as may divert as well as inſtruct.

" Hiſtory of the Heathen Mythology, with an explication of the fables, both allegorical and hiſtorical; with references to the poets.

" Hiſtory of the State of Venice, in a compendious manner.

" Ariſtotle's Ethicks, an Engliſh tranſlation of them with notes.

" Geographical Dictionary from the French.

" Hierocles upon Pythagoras, tranſlated into Engliſh, perhaps with notes. This is done by Norris.

" A book of Letters upon all kinds of ſubjects.

" Claudian, a new edition of his works, *cum notis variorum*, in the manner of Burman.

" Tully's Tuſculan Queſtions, a tranſlation of them.

" Tully's De Naturâ Deorum, a tranſlation of thoſe books.

" Benzo's New Hiſtory of the New World, to be tranſlated.

" Machiavel's Hiſtory of Florence to be tranſlated.

" Hiſtory of the Revival of Learning in Europe, containing an account of whatever contributed to the reſtoration of literature; ſuch as controverſies, printing, the deſtruction of the Greek empire, the encouragement of great men, with the lives of the moſt eminent patrons and moſt eminent early profeſſors of all kinds of learning in different countries.

" A body of Chronology, in verſe, with hiſtorical notes.

" A table of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians, diſtinguiſhed by figures into ſix degrees of value, with notes giving the reaſons of preference or degradation.

" A Collection of Letters from Engliſh authours, with a preface giving ſome account of the writers; with reaſons for ſelection, and criticiſm upon ſtyles; remarks on each letter, if needful.

" A Collection

1784. Ætat. 75. their ſeveral ſhares in that work. It has, according to his direction, been depoſited in the Britiſh

" A Collection of Proverbs from various languages. Jan. 6—53.

" A Dictionary to the Common Prayer, in imitation of Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible. March—52.

" A Collection of Stories and Examples, like thoſe of Valerius Maximus. Jan. 10—53.

" From Ælian, a volume of ſelect Stories, perhaps from others. Jan. 28—53.

" Collection of Travels, Voyages, Adventures, and Deſcriptions of Countries.

" Dictionary of Ancient Hiſtory and Mythology.

" Treatiſe on the Study of Polite Literature, containing the Hiſtory of learning, directions for editions, commentaries, &c.

" Maxims, Characters, and Sentiments, after the manner of Bruyère, collected out of ancient authours, particularly the Greek, with Apophthegms.

" Claſſical Miſcellanies, Select Tranſlations from ancient Greek and Latin authours.

" Lives of illuſtrious perſons, as well of the active as the learned, in imitation of Plutarch.

" Judgement of the learned upon Engliſh authours.

" Poetical Dictionary of the Engliſh tongue.

" Conſiderations upon the preſent ſtate of London.

" Collection of Epigrams, with notes and obſervations.

" Obſervations on the Engliſh language, relating to words, phraſes, and modes of Speech.

" Minutiæ Literariæ, Miſcellaneous reflections, criticiſms, emendations, notes.

" Hiſtory of the Conſtitution.

" Compariſon of Philoſophical and Chriſtian Morality, by ſentences collected from the moraliſts and fathers.

" Plutarch's Lives in Engliſh, with notes.

" Poetry and works of Imagination.

" Hymn to Ignorance.

" The Palace of Sloth—a viſion.

" Coluthus, to be tranſlated.

" Prejudice—a poetical eſſay.

" The Palace of Nonſenſe—a viſion."

Johnſon's

Britiſh Muſeum, and is printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1784. 1784.

During Ætat. 75.

Johnſon's extraordinary facility of compoſition, when he ſhook off his conſtitutional indolence, and reſolutely ſat down to write, is admirably deſcribed by Mr. Courtenay, in his "Poetical Review," which I have ſeveral times quoted:

"While through life's maze he ſent a piercing view,
"His mind expanſive to the object grew.
"With various ſtores of erudition fraught,
"The lively image, the deep-ſearching thought,
"Slept in repoſe;—but when the moment preſs'd,
"The bright ideas ſtood at once confeſs'd;
"Inſtant his genius ſped its vigorous rays,
"And o'er the letter'd world diffus'd a blaze:
"As womb'd with fire the cloud electrick flies,
"And calmly o'er th' horizon ſeems to riſe;
"Touch'd by the pointed ſteel, the lightning flows,
"And all th' expanſe with rich effulgence glows."

We ſhall in vain endeavour to know with exact preciſion every production of Johnſon's pen. He owned to me, that he had written about forty ſermons; but as I underſtood that he had given or ſold them to different perſons, who were to preach them as their own, he did not conſider himſelf at liberty to acknowledge them. Would thoſe who were thus aided by him, who are ſtill alive, and the friends of thoſe who are dead, fairly inform the world, it would be obligingly gratifying a reaſonable curioſity, to which there ſhould, I think, now be no objection.—I have lying before me, in his hand-writing, a fragment of twenty quarto leaves, of a tranſlation into Engliſh of Salluſt. *De Bello Catalinario.* When it was done I have no notion; but it ſeems to have no very ſuperiour merit to mark it as his. Beſides thoſe publications, which with all my chronological care I have aſcertained in the courſe of this work, I am ſatisfied, from internal evidence, to admit alſo as genuine the following:

"Conſiderations on the Caſe of Dr. Trapp's Sermons,†" publiſhed in 1739, in the Gentleman's Magazine. It is a very ingenious defence of the right of *abridging* an authour's work, without being held as infringing his property. This is one of the niceſt queſtions in the *Law of Literature*; and I cannot

1784. Ætat. 75. During his ſleepleſs nights he amuſed himſelf by tranſlating into Latin verſe, from the Greek, many of the epigrams in the *Anthologia*. Theſe tranſlations, with ſome other poems by him in Latin, he gave to his friend Mr. Langton, who, having added a few notes, ſold them to the booksellers for a ſmall ſum, to be given to ſome of Johnſon's relations, which was accordingly done;

I cannot help thinking, that the indulgence of abridging is often exceedingly injurious to authours and bookſellers, and ſhould in very few caſes be permitted.

Dedication for Mrs. Lennox to the Earl of Middleſex, of her "Female Quixote," in 1762.†

Preface to the Catalogue of the Artiſts Exhibition in 1762.†

Preface to Baretti's "Eaſy Leſſons in Italian and Engliſh," in 1755.†

But, though it has been conſtantly aſcribed to him, I cannot allow that he wrote a Dedication to both Houſes of Parliament of a book entitled, "The Evangelical Hiſtory Harmonized." He was no *croaker*; no declaimer againſt *the times*. He would not have written, "That we are fallen upon an age in which corruption is not barely univerſal, is univerſally confeſſed." Nor, "Rapine preys on the publick without oppoſition, and perjury betrays it without inquiry." Nor would he, to excite a ſpeedy reformation, have conjured up ſuch phantoms of terrour as theſe: "A few years longer, and perhaps all endeavours will be in vain. We may be ſwallowed by an earthquake; we may be delivered to our enemies." This is not Johnſonian.

There are indeed, in this Dedication, ſeveral ſentences conſtructed upon the model of thoſe of Johnſon. But the imitation of the form, without the ſpirit of his ſtyle, has been ſo general, that this of itſelf is not ſufficient evidence. Even our news-paper writers aſpire to it. In an account of the funeral of Edwin the comedian, in "The Diary" of Nov. 9, 1790, that ſon of drollery is thus deſcribed; "A man who had ſo often cheered the ſullenneſs of vacancy, and ſuſpended the approaches of ſorrow."

I have not thought it neceſſary to ſpecify every copy of verſes written by Johnſon, it being my intention to publiſh an authentick edition of all his Poetry, with notes.

and

and they are printed in the collection of his works. 1784. Ætat. 75.

A very erroneous notion has circulated as to Johnſon's deficiency in the knowledge of the Greek language, partly owing to the modeſty with which, from knowing how much there was to be learnt, he uſed to mention his own comparative acquiſitions. When Mr. Cumberland * talked to him of the Greek fragments which are ſo well illuſtrated in "The Obſerver," and of the Greek dramatiſts in general, he candidly acknowledged his inſufficiency in that particular branch of Greek literature. Yet it may be ſaid, that though not a great, he was a good Greek ſcholar. Mr. Burney, who is univerſally acknowledged by the beſt judges, to be one of the few men of this age who are very eminent for their ſkill in that noble language, has aſſured me, that Johnſon could give a Greek word for almoſt every Engliſh one; and that although not ſufficiently converſant in the niceties of the language, he upon ſome occaſions diſcovered, even in theſe, a conſiderable degree of critical acumen. Mr. Dalzell, Profeſſor of Greek at Edinburgh, whoſe ſkill in it is unqueſtionable, mentioned to me, in very liberal terms, the impreſſion which was made upon him by Johnſon, in a converſation which they had in London concerning that language. As Johnſon, therefore, was undoubtedly one of the firſt La-

* Mr. Cumberland aſſures me, that he was always treated with great courteſy by Dr. Johnſon, who, in his "Letters to Mrs. Thrale," Vol. II. p. 68, thus ſpeaks of that learned, ingenious, and accompliſhed gentleman: "The want of company is an inconvenience: but Mr. Cumberland is a million."

1784. Ætat. 75. tin ſcholars in modern times, let us not deny to his fame ſome additional ſplendour from Greek. I ſhall now fulfil my promiſe of exhibiting ſpecimens of various ſorts of imitation of Johnſon's ſtyle.

In the "Tranſactions of the Royal Iriſh Academy, 1787," there is an "Eſſay on the Style of Dr. Samuel Johnſon," by the Rev. Robert Burrowes, whoſe reſpect for the great object of his criticiſm * is thus evinced in the concluding paragraph: "I have ſingled him out from the whole body of Engliſh writers, becauſe his univerſally acknowledged beauties would be moſt apt to induce imitation; and I have treated rather on his faults than his perfections, becauſe an eſſay might comprize all the obſervations I could make upon his faults, while volumes would not be ſufficient for a treatiſe on his perfections."

Mr. Burrowes has analyſed the compoſition of Johnſon, and pointed out its peculiarities with much acuteneſs; and I would recommend a careful peruſal of his Eſſay to thoſe, who being captivated by the union of perſpicuity and ſplendour which the writings of Johnſon contain, without having a ſufficient portion of his vigour of mind, may be in danger of becoming bad copyiſts of his manner. I however cannot but obſerve, and I obſerve it to his credit, that this learned gentleman has himſelf caught no

* We muſt ſmile at a little inaccuracy of metaphor in the Preface to the Tranſactions, which is written by Mr. Burrowes, The *critick of the ſtyle of Johnſon* having, with a juſt zeal for literature, obſerved, that the whole nation are called on to exert themſelves, afterwards ſays: "They are *called on* by every *tye* which can have a laudable influence on the heart of man."

mean

mean degree of the expanſion and harmony which, independent of all other circumſtances, characteriſes the ſentences of Johnſon. Thus, in the Preface to the volume in which his Eſſay appears, we find, "If it be ſaid that in ſocieties of this ſort, too much attention is frequently beſtowed on ſubjects barren and ſpeculative, it may be anſwered, that no one ſcience is ſo little connected with the reſt, as not to afford many principles whoſe uſe may extend conſiderably beyond the ſcience to which they primarily belong; and that no propoſition is ſo purely theoretical as to be totally incapable of being applied to practical purpoſes. There is no apparent connection between duration and the cycloidal arch, the properties of which duly attended to, have furniſhed us with our beſt regulated methods of meaſuring time: and he who has made himſelf maſter of the nature and affections of the logarithmick curve is not aware that he has advanced conſiderably towards aſcertaining the proportionable denſity of the air at its various diſtances from the ſurface of the earth." 1784. Ætat. 75.

The ludicrous imitators of Johnſon's ſtyle are innumerable. Their general method is to accumulate hard words, without conſidering, that although he was fond of introducing them occaſionally, there is not a ſingle ſentence in all his writings where they are crowded together, as in the firſt verſe of the following imaginary Ode by him to Mrs. Thrale *, which appeared in the news-papers:

"*Cerviſial coctor's viduate* dame,
"*Opin'ſt* thou this gigantick frame,
"*Pro-*

* Johnſon's wiſhing to unite himſelf with this rich widow was much talked of, but I believe without foundation

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1784. Ætat. 75.

" *Procumbing* at thy ſhrine:
" Shall, *catenated* by thy charms,
" A captive in thy *ambient* arms,
" *Perennially* be thine?"

This, and a thouſand other ſuch attempts, are totally unlike the original, which the writers imagined they were turning into ridicule. There is not ſimilarity enough for burleſque, or even for caricature.

Mr. COLMAN, in his "Proſe on ſeveral Occaſions," has "A Letter from LEXIPHANES; containing Propoſals for a *Gloſſary* or *Vocabulary* of the *Vulgar Tongue:* intended as a Supplement to a larger DICTIONARY." It is evidently meant as a ſportive ſally of ridicule on Johnſon, whoſe ſtyle is thus imitated, without being groſsly overcharged. "It is eaſy to foreſee, that the idle and illiterate will complain that I have increaſed their labours by endeavouring to diminiſh them; and that I have explained what is more eaſy by what is more difficult—*ignotum per ignotius.* I expect, on the other hand, the liberal acknowledgements of the learned. He who is buried in ſcholaſtick retirement, ſecluded from the aſſemblies of the gay, and remote from the circles of the polite, will at once comprehend the definitions, and be grateful for ſuch a ſeaſonable and neceſſary elucidation of his mother tongue." Annexed to this letter is a ſhort ſpecimen of the work, thrown together in a vague and deſultory man-

The report, however, gave occaſion for a poem, not without characteriſtical merit, entitled, "Ode to Mrs. Thrale, by Samuel Johnſon, LL. D. on their ſuppoſed approaching Nuptials:" printed for Mr. Faulder, in Bond-ſtreet.

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ner, not even adhering to alphabetical concatenation †. 1784. Ætat. 75.

The ſerious imitators of Johnſon's ſtyle, whether intentionally or by the imperceptible effect of its ſtrength and animation, are, as I have had already occaſion to obſerve, ſo many, that I might introduce quotations from a great proportion of the writers in our language, ſince he appeared. I ſhall point out only the following.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D. D.

" In other parts of the globe, man, in his rudeſt ſtate, appears as lord of the creation, giving law to various tribes of animals which he has tamed and reduced to ſubjection. The Tartar follows his prey on the horſe which he has reared, or tends his numerous herds, which furniſh him both with food and cloathing; the Arab has rendered the camel docile, and avails himſelf of its perſevering ſtrength; the Laplander has formed the rein-deer to be ſubſervient to his will; and even the people of Kamſchatka have trained their dogs to labour. This command over the inferiour creatures is one of the nobleſt prerogatives of man, and among the greateſt efforts of his wiſom and power. With-

† " *Higgledy-piggledy*—Conglomeration and confuſion.
" *Hodge-podge*—A culinary mixture of heterogeneous ingredients; applied metaphorically to all diſcordant combinations.
" *Tit for Tat*—Adequate retaliation.
" *Shilly Shally*—Heſitation and irreſolution.
" *Fee! fa! fum!*—Gigantick intonations.
" *Rigmarole*—Diſcourſe, incoherent and rhapſodical.
" *Crincum crancum*—Lines of irregularity and involution.
" *Ding-dong*—Tintinabulary chimes, uſed metaphorically to ſignify diſpatch and vehemence."

out

1784. Ætat. 75. out this, his dominion is incomplete. He is a monarch who has no ſubjects; a maſter without ſervants; and muſt perform every operation by the ſtrength of his own arm *.

Edward Gibbon, Eſq.

"Of all our paſſions and appetites, the love of power is of the moſt imperious and unſociable nature, ſince the pride of one man requires the ſubmiſſion of the multitude. In the tumult of civil diſcord the laws of ſociety loſe their force, and their place is ſeldom ſupplied by thoſe of humanity. The ardour of contention, the pride of victory, the deſpair of ſucceſs, the memory of paſt injuries, and the fear of future dangers, all contribute to inflame the mind, and to ſilence the voice of pity †."

Miſs Burney.

"My family miſtaking ambition for honour, and rank for dignity, have long planned a ſplendid connection for me, to which, though my invariable repugnance has ſtopped any advances, their wiſhes and their views immoveably adhere. I am but too certain they will now liſten to no other. I dread therefore to make a trial where I deſpair of ſucceſs; I know not how to riſk a prayer with thoſe who may ſilence me by a command ‡.

* "Hiſtory of America," Vol. I. quarto, p. 332.
† "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Vol. I. Chap. IV.
‡ "Cecilia," Book VII. Chap. I.

Reverend

1784.
Ætat. 75.

Reverend Mr. NARES*.

"In an enlightened and improving age, much perhaps is not to be apprehended from the inroads of mere caprice; at ſuch a period it will generally be perceived, that needleſs irregularity is the worſt of all deformities, and that nothing is ſo truly elegant in language as the ſimplicity of unviolated analogy.—Rules will therefore be obſerved, ſo far as they are known and acknowledged: but, at the ſame time, the deſire of improvement having been once excited will not remain inactive; and its efforts, unleſs aſſiſted by knowledge, as much as they are prompted by zeal, will not unfrequently be found pernicious; ſo that the very perſons whoſe intention it is to perfect the inſtrument of reaſon, will deprave and diſorder it unknowingly. At ſuch a time, then, it becomes peculiarly neceſſary that the analogy of language ſhould be fully examined and underſtood; that its rules ſhould be carefully laid down; and that it ſhould be clearly known how much it contains, which being already right ſhould be defended from change and violation: how much it has that demands amendment; and how much that, for fear of greater inconveniences, muſt perhaps be left unaltered, though irregular."

* The paſſage which I quote is taken from that gentleman's "ELEMENTS OF ORTHOEPY; containing a diſtinct View of the whole Analogy of the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, ſo far as relates to *Pronunciation, Accent, and Quantity*," London, 1784. I beg leave to offer my particular acknowledgements to the author of a work of uncommon merit and great utility. I know no book which contains, in the ſame compaſs, more learning, polite literature, ſound ſenſe, accuracy of arrangement, and perſpicuity of expreſſion.

A diſtin-

1784. Ætat. 75. A diſtinguiſhed authour in "THE MIRROR*," a periodical paper publiſhed at Edinburgh, has imitated Johnſon very cloſely. Thus, in No. 16—"The effects of the return of ſpring have been frequently remarked as well in relation to the human mind as to the animal and vegetable world. The reviving power of this ſeaſon has been traced from the fields to the herds that inhabit them, and from the lower claſſes of beings up to man. Gladneſs and joy are deſcribed as prevailing through univerſal Nature, animating the low of the cattle, the carol of the birds, and the pipe of the ſhepherd."

The Reverend Mr. KNOX, maſter of Tunbridge ſchool, appears to have the *imitare aveo* of Johnſon's ſtyle perpetually in his mind; and to his aſſiduous ſtudy of it we may partly aſcribe the attentive popularity of his writings †."

In his "Eſſays, Moral and Literary," No. 3, we find the following paſſage:—"The poliſh of external grace may indeed be deferred till the approach of manhood. When ſolidity is obtained by purſuing the modes preſcribed by our forefathers, then may the file be uſed. The firm ſubſtance will bear attrition, and the luſtre then acquired will be durable."

There is, however, one in No. 11, which is blown up in ſuch tumidity as to be truly ludicrous. The writer means to tell us, that Members of Parliament, who have run in debt by extravagance, will ſell their votes to avoid an

* That collection was preſented to Dr. Johnſon I believe by its authours; and I heard him ſpeak very well of it.

† It were to be wiſhed, that he had imitated that great man in every reſpect, and had not followed the example of Dr. Adam Smith, in ungraciouſly attacking his venerable *Alma Mater*, Oxford.

arreſt

arreſt *, which he thus expreſſes:—"They who build houſes and collect coſtly pictures and furniture, with the money of an honeſt artiſan or mechanick, will be very glad of emancipation from the hands of a bailiff, by a ſale of their ſenatorial ſuffrage." 1784. Ætat. 75.

But I think the moſt perfect imitation of Johnſon is a profeſſed one, entitled "A Criticiſm on Gray's Elegy in a Country Church-yard," ſaid to be written by Mr. YOUNG, Profeſſor of Greek at Glaſgow, and of which let him have the credit, unleſs a better title can be ſhewn. It has not only the peculiarities of Johnſon's ſtyle, but that very ſpecies of literary diſcuſſion and illuſtration for which he was eminent. Having already quoted ſo much from others, I ſhall refer the curious to this performance, with an aſſurance of much entertainment

Yet whatever merit there may be in any imitations of Johnſon's ſtyle, every good judge muſt ſee that they are obviouſly different from the original; for all of them are either deficient in its force, or overloaded with its peculiarities; and the powerful ſentiment to which it is ſuited is not to be found.

Johnſon's affection for his departed relations ſeemed to grow warmer as he approached nearer to the time when he might hope to ſee them again. It probably appeared to him that he ſhould upbraid himſelf with unkind inattention, were he to leave the world, without having paid a tribute of reſpect to their memory.

* Mr. Knox, in his "Moral and Literary Abſtraction," may be excuſed for not knowing the political regulations of his country. No ſenator can be in the hands of a bailiff.

1784. Ætat. 75.

To Mr. GREEN, *Apothecary, at Lichfield.*

" DEAR SIR,

" I HAVE encloſed the Epitaph * for my Father, Mother, and Brother, to be all engraved on the large ſize, and laid in the middle aiſle in St. Michael's church, which I requeſt the clergyman and church-wardens to permit.

" The firſt care muſt be to find the exact place of interment, that the ſtone may protect the bodies. Then let the ſtone be deep, maſſy, and hard; and do not let the difference of ten pounds or more, defeat our purpoſe.

" I have encloſed ten pounds, and Mrs. Porter will pay you ten more, which I gave her for the ſame purpoſe. What more is wanted ſhall be ſent; and I beg that all poſſible haſte may be made, for I wiſh to have it done while I am yet alive. Let me know, dear Sir, that you receive this. I am, Sir, your moſt humble ſervant,

SAM. JOHNSON."

" Dec. 2, 1784.

To Mrs. LUCY PORTER, *in Lichfield.*

" DEAR MADAM,

" I AM very ill, and deſire your prayers. I have ſent Mr. Green the Epitaph, and a power to call on you for ten pounds.

" I laid this ſummer a ſtone over Tetty, in the chapel of Bromley in Kent. The inſcription

* No man underſtood that ſpecies of compoſition better than Johnſon. I ſhould have mentioned in 1773, his Epitaph on Mrs. Bell, wife of his friend JOHN BELL, Eſq. It is printed in his Works as well as the above.

is

is in Latin, of which this is the Engliſh. [Here a tranſlation.] 1784. Ætat. 75.

"That this is done, I thought it fit that you ſhould know. What care will be taken of us, who can tell? May GOD pardon and bleſs us, for JESUS CHRIST's ſake.

I am, &c.

SAM. JOHNSON."

"Dec. 2, 1784.

My readers are now at laſt to behold SAMUEL JOHNSON preparing himſelf for that doom from which the moſt exalted powers afford no exemption to man. Death had always been to him an object of terrour; ſo that though by no means happy, he ſtill clung to life with an eagerneſs at which many have wondered. At any time when he was ill, he was very much pleaſed to be told that he looked better. An ingenious member of the *Eumelian Club* * informs me, that upon one occaſion when he ſaid to him that he ſaw health returning to his cheek, Johnſon ſeized him by the hand and exclaimed, "Sir, you are one of the kindeſt friends I ever had."

His own ſtate of his views of futurity will appear truly rational, and may perhaps impreſs the unthinking with ſerioufneſs.

"You know (ſays he †) I never thought confidence with reſpect to futurity any part of the character of a brave, a wiſe, or a good man. Bravery has no place where it can avail nothing;

* A Club in London, founded by the learned and ingenious phyſician, Dr. Aſh, in honour of whoſe name it was called *Eumelian*, from the Greek; though it was warmly contended, and even put to a vote, that it ſhould have the more obvious appellation of *Fraxinean*, from the Latin.

† "Letters to Mrs. Thrales," Vol. II. p. 350.

wiſdom

1784. Ætat. 75. wiſdom impreſſes ſtrongly the conſciouſneſs of thoſe faults, of which it is perhaps an aggravation: and goodneſs, always wiſhing to be better, and imputing every deficience to criminal negligence, and every fault to voluntary corruption, never dares to ſuppoſe the forgiveneſs fulfilled, nor what is wanting in the crime ſupplied by penitence.

"This is the ſtate of the beſt; but what muſt be the condition of him whoſe heart will not ſuffer him to rank himſelf among the beſt, or among the good? Such muſt be his dread of the approaching trial, as will leave him little attention to the opinion of thoſe whom he is leaving for ever; and the ſerenity that is not felt, it can be no virtue to feign."

His great fear of death, and the ſtrange dark manner in which Sir John Hawkins imparts the uneaſineſs which he expreſſed on account of offences with which he charged himſelf, may give occaſion to injurious ſuſpicions, as if there had been ſomething of more than ordinary criminality weighing upon his conſcience. On that account, therefore, as well as from the regard to truth which he inculcated *, I am to mention, (with all poſſible reſpect and delicacy however,) that his conduct after he came to London, and had aſſociated with Savage and others, was not ſo ſtrictly virtuous, in one reſpect, as when he was a younger man. It was well known, that his amorous inclinations were uncommonly ſtrong and impetuous. He owned to many of his friends, that he uſed to take women of the town to taverns, and hear them relate their hiſ-

* See what he ſaid to Mr. Malone, before in this volume.

tory.—

tory.—In ſhort, it muſt not be concealed, that like many other good and pious men, amongſt whom we may place the Apoſtle Paul, upon his own authority, Johnſon was not free from propenſities which were ever, "warring againſt the law of his mind,"—and that in his combats with them, he was ſometimes overcome. 1784. Ætat. 75.

Here let the profane and licentious pauſe;—let them not thoughtleſsly ſay that Johnſon was an *hypocrite*, or that his *principles* were not firm, becauſe his *practice* was not uniformly conformable to what he profeſſed.

Let the queſtion be conſidered independent of moral and religious aſſociation; and no man will deny that thouſands, in many inſtances, act againſt conviction. Is a prodigal, for example, an *hypocrite*, when he owns he is ſatisfied that his extravagance will bring him to ruin and miſery? We are *ſure* he *believes* it; but immediate inclination, ſtrengthened by indulgence, prevails over that belief in influencing his conduct. Why then ſhall credit be refuſed to the *ſincerity* of thoſe who acknowledge their perſuaſion of moral and religious duty, yet ſometimes fail of living as it requires? I heard Dr. Johnſon once obſerve, "There is ſomething noble in puniſhing truth, though it condemns one's ſelf *." And one who ſaid in his preſence, "he had no notion of people being in earneſt in their good profeſſions, whoſe practice was not ſuitable to them," was thus reprimanded by him:—Sir, are you ſo groſsly ignorant of human nature as not to know that a man may be very ſincere in good principles, without having good practice †?

* "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," 3d edit. p. 209.

† Ibid. p. 374.

But

1784. Ætat. 75. But let no man encourage or ſoothe himſelf in "preſumptuous ſin," from knowing that Johnſon was ſometimes hurried into indulgences which he thought criminal. I have exhibited this circumſtance as a ſhade in ſo great a character, both from my ſacred love of truth, and to ſhew that he was not ſo weakly ſcrupulous as he has been repreſented by thoſe who imagine that the ſins of which a deep ſenſe was upon his mind, were merely ſuch little venial trifles as pouring milk into his tea on Good-Friday. His underſtanding will be defended by my ſtatement, if his conſiſtency of conduct be in ſome degree impaired. But what wiſe man would, for momentary gratifications, deliberately ſubject himſelf to ſuffer ſuch uneaſineſs as we find was experienced by Johnſon in reviewing his conduct as compared with his notion of the ethicks of the goſpel? Let the following paſſages be kept in remembrance:—"O GOD, giver and preſerver of all life, by whoſe power I was created, and by whoſe providence I am ſuſtained, look down upon me with tenderneſs and mercy; grant that I may not have been created to be finally deſtroyed; that I may not be preſerved to add wickedneſs to wickedneſs *."—O LORD, let me not ſink into total depravity; look down upon me, and reſcue me at laſt from the captivity of ſin †."—Almighty and moſt merciful Father, who haſt continued my life from year to year, grant that by longer life I become leſs deſirous of ſinful pleaſures, and more careful of eternal happineſs ‡."—"Let not my years be multiplied to increaſe my guilt; but as my age

* "Prayers and Meditation."
† Ibid.
‡ Ibid.

advances,

advances, let me become more pure in my thoughts, more regular in my desires, and more obedient to thy laws *."—"Forgive, O merciful Lord, whatever I have done contrary to thy laws. Give me such a sense of my wickedness as may produce true contrition and effectual repentance; so that when I shall be called into another state, I may be received among the sinners to whom sorrow and reformation have obtained pardon, for JESUS CHRSIT's sake. Amen†." 1784. Ætat. 75.

Such was the distress of mind, such the penitence of Johnson in his hours of privacy, and in his devout approaches to his Maker. His *sincerity* therefore must appear to every candid mind unquestionable.

It is of essential consequence to keep in view, that there was in this excellent man's conduct no false principle of *commutation*, no *deliberate* indulgence in sin, in consideration of a counterbalance of duty. His offending, and his repenting, were distinct and separate ‡: and when we consider his almost unexampled attention to truth, his inflexible integrity, his constant piety, who will dare to "cast a stone" at him? Besides, let it never be forgotten, that he cannot be charged with any offence indicating badness of *heart*, any thing dishonest, base, or malignant; but that, on the contrary, he was charitable in an extraordinary degree: so that even

* Prayers and Meditations. † Ibid.

‡ Dr. Johnson related, with an earnestness of approbation, a story of a gentleman, who, in an impulse of passion, overcame the virtues of a young woman. When she said to him, "I am afraid we have done wrong!" he answered, "Yes, we have done wrong;—for I would not *debauch her mind*."

1784. Ætat. 75. in one of his own rigid judgements of himſelf, (Eaſter-eve, 1781,) while he ſays, "I have corrected no external habits; he is obliged to own, "I hope that ſince my laſt communion I have advanced by pious reflections in my ſubmiſſion to God, and my benevolence to man*."

I am conſcious that this is the moſt difficult and dangerous part of my biographical work, and I cannot but be very anxious concerning it. I truſt that I have got through it, preſerving at once my regard to truth—to my friend—and to the intereſts of virtue and religion. Nor can I apprehend that more harm can enſue from the knowledge of the irregularity of Johnſon, guarded as I have ſtated it, than from knowing that Addiſon and Parnell were intemperate in the uſe of wine; which Johnſon himſelf, in his Lives of the celebrated writers, and pious men, has not forborne to record.

It is not my intention to give a very minute detail of the particulars of Johnſon's remaining days, of whom it was now evident, that the criſis was faſt approaching, when he muſt "*die like men, and fall like one of the Princes.*" Yet it will be inſtructive, as well as gratifying to the curioſity of my readers, to record a few circumſtances, on the authenticity of which they may perfectly rely, as I have been at the utmoſt pains to obtain them from the beſt authority.

Dr. Heberden, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Warren, and Dr. Butter, phyſicians, generouſly attended him, without accepting of any fees, as did Mr. Cruikſhank, ſurgeon; and all that could be done from profeſſional ſkill and ability was tried, to prolong a life ſo truly valuable. He

* "Prayers and Meditations."

himſelf,

himſelf, indeed, having on account of his very bad conſtitution been perpetually applying himſelf to medical inquiries, united his own efforts with thoſe of the gentlemen who attended him; and imagining that the dropſical collection of water which oppreſſed him, might be drawn off, by making inciſions in his body, he, with his uſual reſolute defiance of pain, cut deep, when he thought that his ſurgeon had done it too tenderly *. 1784. Ætat. 75.

About eight or ten days before his death, when Dr. Brocklesby paid him his morning viſit, he ſeemed very low and deſponding, and ſaid, "I have been as a dying man all night." He then emphatically broke out, in the words of Shakſpeare,

"Can'ſt thou not miniſter to a mind diſeas'd?
"Pluck from the memory a rooted ſorrow?
"Raze out the written troubles of the brain?
"And with ſome ſweet oblivious antidote,
"Cleanſe the full boſom of that perilous ſtuff,
"Which weighs upon the heart."

To which Dr. Brocklesby readily anſwered from the ſame great poet:

"——————— therein the patient
"Muſt miniſter unto himſelf."

* This bold experiment, Sir John Hawkins has related in ſuch a manner as to ſuggeſt a charge againſt Johnſon of intentionally haſtening his end; a charge ſo very inconſiſtent with his character in every reſpect, that it is injurious even to refute it, as Sir John has thought it neceſſary to do. It is evident, that what Johnſon did in hopes of relief indicated an extraordinary eagerneſs to retard his diſſolution.

1784. Ætat. 75. Johnſon expreſſed himſelf much ſatisfied with the application.

On another day after this, when talking on the ſubject of prayer, Dr. Brockleſby repeated from Juvenal,

"*Orandum eſt ut ſit mens ſana in corpore ſano.*"

and ſo on to the end of the tenth ſatire; but in running it quickly over he happened in the line

"*Qui ſpatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat,*"

to pronounce *ſupremum* for *extremum*; at which Johnſon's critical ear inſtantly took offence, and diſcourſing vehemently on the unmetrical effect of ſuch a lapſe, he ſhewed himſelf as full as ever of the ſpirit of the grammarian.

Having no near relations, it had been for ſome time Johnſon's intention to make a liberal proviſion for his faithful ſervant, Mr. Francis Barber, whom he looked upon as particularly under his protection, and whom he had all along treated truly as an humble friend. Having aſked Dr. Brockleſby what would be a proper annuity to bequeath to a favourite ſervant, and being anſwered that it muſt depend on the circumſtances of the maſter; and that in the caſe of a nobleman fifty pounds a year was conſidered as an adequate reward for many years faithful ſervice. "Then (ſaid Johnſon) ſhall I be *nobliſſimus*, for I mean to leave Frank ſeventy pounds a year, and I deſire you to tell him ſo." It is ſtrange, however, to think, that Johnſon was not free from that general weakneſs of being averſe to execute a will, ſo that he delayed it

it from time to time; and had it not been for Sir John Hawkins's repeatedly urging it, I think it is probable that his kind reſolution would not have been fulfilled. After making one which, as Sir John Hawkins informs us, extended no further than the promiſed annuity, Johnſon's final diſpoſition of his property was eſtabliſhed by a Will and Codicil, of which copies are ſubjoined *. 1784. Ætat. 75.

The

* "IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN. I SAMUEL JOHNSON, being in full poſſeſſion of my faculties, but fearing this night may put an end to my life, do ordain this my laſt Will and Teſtament. I bequeath to GOD a ſoul polluted with many ſins, but I hope purified by JESUS CHRIST.—I leave ſeven hundred and fifty pounds in the hands of Bennet Langton, Eſq. three hundred pounds in the hands of Mr. Barclay and Mr. Perkins, brewers; one hundred pounds in the hands of Dr. Percy, Biſhop of Dromore; one thouſand pounds, three *per cent*, annuities, in the publick funds; and one hundred pounds now lying by me in ready money: all theſe before-mentioned ſums and property I leave, I ſay, to Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, of Doctors Commons, in truſt, for the following uſes:—That is to ſay, to pay to the repreſentatives of the late William Innys, bookſeller, in St. Paul's Church-yard, the ſum of two hundred pounds; to Mrs. White, my female ſervant, one hundred pounds ſtock in the three *per cent.* annuities aforeſaid. The reſt of the aforeſaid ſums of money and property, together with my books, plate, and houſehold furniture, I leave to the before-mentioned Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, alſo in truſt, to be applied, after paying my debts, to the uſe of Francis Barber, my man-ſervant, a negro, in ſuch a manner as they ſhall judge moſt fit and available to his benefit. And I appoint the aforeſaid Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, ſole executors of this my laſt

1784. Ætat. 75. The conſideration of the numerous papers of which he was poſſeſſed, ſeems to have ſtruck Johnſon's

laſt will and teſtament, hereby revoking all former wills and teſtaments whatever In witneſs whereof I hereunto ſubſcribe my name, and affix my ſeal, this eighth day of December, 1784.

" SAM. JOHNSON, (L. S.)

" Signed, ſealed, publiſhed, declared, and delivered by the ſaid teſtator, as his laſt will and teſtament, in the preſence of us, the word *two* being firſt inſerted in the oppoſite page.

" GEORGE STRAHAN.
" JOHN DESMOULINS."

" BY way of Codicil to my laſt Will and Teſtament, I SAMUEL JOHNSON, give, deviſe, and bequeath, my meſſuage or tenement, ſituate at Lichfield, in the county of Stafford, with the appurtenances, in the tenure or occupation of Mrs. Bond, of Lichfield aforeſaid, or of Mr. Hinchman, her under-tenant, to my executors in truſt, to ſell and diſpoſe of the ſame; and the money ariſing from ſuch ſale I give and bequeath as follows, viz. to Thomas and Benjamin the ſons of Fiſher Johnſon, late of Leiceſter, and ——— Whiting, daughter of Thomas Johnſon, late of Coventry, and the grand-daughter of the ſaid Thomas Johnſon, one full and equal fourth part each; but in caſe there ſhall be more grand-daughters than one of the ſaid Thomas Johnſon, living at the time of my deceaſe, I give and bequeath the part or ſhare of that one to, and equally between ſuch grand-daughters. I give and bequeath to the Reverend Mr. Rogers, of Berkley, near Froome, in the county of Somerſet, the ſum of one hundred pounds, requeſting him to apply the ſame towards the maintenance of Elizabeth Heine, a lunatick. I alſo give and bequeath to my god-children, the ſon and daughter of Mauritius Lowe, painter, each of them, one hundred pounds of my ſtock in the three *per cent.* conſolidated annuities, to be applied and diſpoſed of by

Johnſon's mind with a ſudden anxiety, and as they were in great confuſion, it is much to be lamented 1784. Ætat. 75.

by and at the diſcretion of my Executors, in the education or ſettlement in the world of them my ſaid legatees. Alſo I give and bequeath to Sir John Hawkins, one of my Executors, the Annales Eccleſiaſtici of Baronius, and Holingſhed's and Stowe's Chronicles, and alſo an octavo Common Prayer Book. To Bennet Langton, Eſq. I give and bequeath my Polyglot Bible. To Sir Joſhua Reynolds, my great French Dictionary, by Martiniere, and my own copy of my folio Engliſh Dictionary, of the laſt reviſion. To Dr. William Scott, one of my Executors, the Dictionnaire de Commerce, and Lectius's edition of the Greek Poets. To Mr. Windham, Poetæ Græci Heroici per Henricum Stephanum. To the Reverend Mr. Strahan, vicar of Islington, in Middleſex, Mills's Greek Teſtament, Beza's Greek Teſtament by Stephens, all my Latin Bibles, and my Greek Bible by Wechelius. To Dr. Heberden, Dr. Brocklesby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikſhank the ſurgeon who attended me, Mr. Holder my apothecary, Gerard Hamilton, Eſq. Mrs. Gardiner, of Snow-hill, Mrs. Frances Reynolds, Mr. Hoole, and the Reverend Mr. Hoole, his ſon, each a book at their election, to keep as a token of remembrance. I alſo give and bequeath to Mr. John Deſmoulins, two hundred pounds conſolidated three *per cent.* annuities; and to Mr. Saſſires, the Italian maſter, the ſum of five pounds, to be laid out in books of piety for his own uſe. And whereas the ſaid Bennet Langton hath agreed, in conſideration of the ſum of ſeven hundred and fifty pounds, mentioned in my Will to be in his hands, to grant and ſecure an annuity of ſeventy pounds, payable during the life of me and my ſervant Francis Barber, and the life of the ſurvivor of us, to Mr. George Stubbs in truſt for us; my mind and will is, that in caſe of my deceaſe before the ſaid agreement ſhall be perfected, the ſaid ſum of ſeven hundred and fifty pounds,

1784. Ætat. 75. lamented that he had not entruſted ſome faithful and diſcreet perſon with the care and ſelection of

pounds, and the bond for ſecuring the ſaid ſum, ſhall go to the ſaid Francis Barber; and I hereby give and bequeath to him the ſame, in lieu of the bequeſt in his favour, contained in my ſaid will. And I hereby empower my Executors to deduct and retain all expences that ſhall or may be occurred in the execution of my ſaid Will, or of this Codicil thereto, out of ſuch eſtate and effects as I ſhall die poſſeſſed of. All the reſt, reſidue, and remainder of my eſtate and effects, I give and bequeath to my ſaid Executors, in truſt for the ſaid Francis Barber, his Executors and Adminiſtrators. Witneſs my hand and ſeal this ninth day of December 1784.

" SAM. JOHNSON, (L. S.)

" Signed, ſealed, publiſhed, declared, and delilivered by the ſaid Samuel Johnſon, as, and for a Codicil to his laſt Will and Teſtament, in the preſence of us, who, in his preſence, and at his requeſt, and alſo in the preſence of each other, have hereto ſubſcribed our names as witneſſes.

" JOHN COPLEY.
" WILLIAM GIBSON.
" HENRY COLL."

Upon theſe teſtamentary deeds it is proper to make a few obſervations.

His expreſs declaration with his dying breath of his faith as a Chriſtian, as it had been often practiſed in ſuch ſolemn writings, was of real conſequence from this great man, as the conviction of a mind equally acute and ſtrong might well overbalance the doubts of others who were his contemporaries. The expreſſion *polluted* may to ſome convey an impreſſion of more than ordinary contamination; but that is not warranted by its genuine meaning, as appears from "The Rambler," No. 42. The ſame word is uſed in

of them; inſtead of which, he, in a precipitate manner, burnt maſſes of them, as I ſhould appre- 1784. Ætat. 75.

in the will of Dr. Sanderſon, Biſhop of Lincoln, who was piety itſelf.

His legacy of two hundred pounds to the repreſentatives of Mr. Innys, bookſeller in St. Paul's church-yard, was the effect of a very worthy motive. He told Sir John Hawkins, that his father having become bankrupt, Mr. Innys had aſſiſted him with money or credit to continue his buſineſs. "This (ſaid he) I conſider as an obligation on me to be grateful to his deſcendants."

The amount of his property proved to be conſiderably more than he had ſuppoſed it to be. Sir John Hawkins eſtimates the bequeſt to Francis Barber at a ſum little ſhort of fifteen hundred pounds, including an annuity of ſeventy pounds to be paid to him by Mr. Langton, in conſideration of ſeven hundred and fifty pounds, which Johnſon had lent to that gentleman. Sir John ſeems not a little angry at this bequeſt, and mutters "a caveat againſt oſtentatious bounty and favour to negroes." But ſurely when a man has money entirely of his own acquiſition, eſpecially when he has no near relations, he may, without blame, diſpoſe of it as he pleaſes, and with great propriety to a faithful ſervant. Mr. Barber, by the recommendation of his maſter, retired to Lichfield, where he might paſs the reſt of his days in comfort.

It has been objected that Johnſon has omitted many of his beſt friends when leaving books to ſeveral as tokens of his laſt remembrance. The names of Dr. Adams, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Burney, Mr. Hector, Mr. Murphy, the Authour of this Work, and others who were intimate with him, are not to be found in his Will. This may be accounted for by conſidering, that as he was very near his diſſolution at the time, he probably mentioned ſuch as happened to occur to him; and that he may have recollected, that he had formerly ſhewn others ſuch proofs of his regard, that it was not neceſſary to crowd his Will with their names.

1784. Ætat. 75. apprehend, with little regard to diſcrimination. Not that I ſuppoſe we have been thus deprived of any compoſitions which he had ever intended for the publick eye; but, from what eſcaped the flames, I judge that many curious circumſtances relating both to himſelf and other literary characters have periſhed.

Two very valuable articles, I am ſure, we have loſt, which were two quarto volumes, containing a full, fair, and moſt particular ac-

names. Mrs. Lucy Porter was much diſpleaſed that nothing was left to her; but beſides what I have now ſtated, ſhe ſhould have conſidered, that ſhe had left nothing to Johnſon by her Will, which was made during his life-time, as appeared at her deceaſe.

His enumerating ſeveral perſons at one group, and leaving them "each a book at their election," might poſſibly have given occaſion to a curious queſtion as to the order of choice, had they not luckily fixed on different books. His library, though by no means handſome in its appearance, was ſold by Mr. Chriſtie for two hundred and forty-ſeven pounds, nine ſhillings, many people being deſirous to have a book which belonged to Dr. Johnſon. In many of them he had written little notes, ſometimes tender memorials of his departed wife; as, "This was dear Tetty's book:" ſometimes occaſional remarks of different ſorts. Mr. Lyſons, of Clifford's Inn, has favoured me with the two following:

In "Holy Rules and Helps to Devotion, by Bryan Duppa, Lord Biſhop of Winton," *Preces quidam videtur diligenter tractaſſe; ſpero non inauditus.*"

In "The Roſicrucian infallible Axiomata, by John Heydon, Gent." Prefixed to which are ſome verſes addreſſed to the authour, ſigned Amb. Waters, A. M. Coll. Ex. Oxon. "*Theſe Latin verſes were written to Hobbes by Bathurſt, upon his Treatiſe on Human Nature, and have no relation to the book.——An odd fraud.*"

count

count of his own life, from his earlieſt recollection. I owned to him, that having accidentally ſeen them, I had read a great deal in them; and apologiſing for the liberty I had taken, aſked him if I could help it. He placidly anſwered, "Why, Sir, I do not think you could have helped it." I ſaid that I had for once in my life felt half an inclination to commit theft. It had come into my mind to carry off thoſe two volumes, and never ſee him more. Upon my inquiring how this would have affected him, "Sir, (ſaid he), I ſhould have gone mad *. 1784. Ætat. 75.

* One of theſe volumes, Sir John Hawkins informs us he put into his pocket; for which the excuſe he ſtates is, that he meant to preſerve it from falling into the hands of a perſon whom he deſcribes ſo as to make it ſufficiently clear who is meant; "having ſtrong reaſon (ſays he) to ſuſpect that this man might find and make an ill uſe of the book." Why Sir John ſhould ſuppoſe that the gentleman alluded to would act in this manner, he has not thought fit to explain. But what he did was not approved of by Johnſon; who, upon being acquainted of it without delay by a friend, expreſſed great indignation, and warmly inſiſted on the book being delivered up; and, in the ſuppoſition of his afterwards miſſing it, without knowing by whom it had been taken, he ſaid, "Sir, I ſhould have gone out of the world diſtruſting half mankind." Sir John next day wrote a letter to Johnſon, aſſigning the reaſons for his conduct; upon which Johnſon obſerved to Mr. Langton, "Biſhop Sanderſon could not have dictated a better letter. I could almoſt ſay, *Melius eſt ſic penituiſſe quam non erraſſe.*" The agitation into which Johnſon was thrown by this incident, probably made him haſtily burn thoſe precious records which muſt ever be regretted.

During

1784. Ætat. 75. During his laſt illneſs, Johnſon experienced the ſteady and kind attachment of his numerous friends. Mr. Hoole has drawn up a narrative of what paſſed in the viſits which he paid to him during that time, from the 10th of November to the 13th of December, the day of his death inclusive, and has favoured me with a peruſal of it. Nobody was more attentive to him than Mr. Langton, to whom he tenderly ſaid, *Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.* And I think it highly to the honour of Mr. Windham, that his important occupations as an active ſtateſman did not prevent him from paying aſſiduous reſpect to the dying Sage, whom he revered. Mr. Langton informs me, that "one day he found Mr. Burke and four or five more friends ſitting with Johnſon. Mr. Burke ſaid to him, 'I am afraid, Sir, ſuch a number of us may be oppreſſive to you.'—'No, Sir, (ſaid Johnſon,) it is not ſo; and I muſt be in a wretched ſtate indeed when your company would not be a delight to me.' Mr. Burke, in a tremulous voice, expreſſive of being very tenderly affected, replied, 'My dear Sir, you have always been too good to me.' Immediately afterwards he went away. This was the laſt circumſtance in the acquaintance of theſe two eminent men."

It is to the mutual credit of Johnſon and divines of different communions, that although he was a ſteady Church-of-England man, there was nevertheleſs much agreeable intercourſe between him and them. Let me particularly name the late Mr. La Trobe, and Mr. Hutton of the Moravian profeſſion. His intimacy with the Engliſh Benedictines at Paris has been mentioned; and as an additional proof of the charity in which he lived with good men of the Romiſh Church, I am happy in this opportunity of

of recording his friendſhip with the Reverend Thomas Huſſey, D. D. His Catholick Majeſty's Chaplain of Embaſſy at the Court of London, that very reſpectable man, eminent not only for his powerful eloquence as a preacher, but for his various abilities and acquiſitions.—Nay though Johnſon loved a Preſbyterian the leaſt, this did not prevent his having a long and uninterrupted ſocial connection with the Rev. Dr. James Fordyce, who, ſince his death hath gratefully celebrated him in a warm ſtrain of devotional compoſition. 1784. Ætat. 75.

Amidſt the melancholy clouds which hung over the dying Johnſon, his characteriſtical manner ſhewed itſelf on different occaſions.

When Dr. Warren, in the uſual ſtyle, hoped that he was better; his anſwer was, "No, Sir. You cannot conceive with what acceleration I advance towards death."

A man whom he had never ſeen before was employed one night to ſit up with him. Being aſked next morning how he liked his attendant, his anſwer was, "Not at all, Sir. The fellow's an ideot; he is as aukward as a turn-ſpit when firſt put into the wheel, and as ſleepy as a dormouſe."

Mr. Windham having placed a pillow conveniently to ſupport him, he thanked him for his kindneſs, and ſaid, "That will do—all that a pillow can do."

He repeated with great ſpirit a poem, conſiſting of about fifteen ſtanzas in four lines, in alternate rhymes, which he ſaid he had compoſed ſome years before, on occaſion of a young gentleman's coming of age; ſaying he had never repeated it but once ſince he compoſed it, and had given but one copy of it. From the ſpecimen

1784. Ætat. 75. ſpecimen of it which Mrs. Piozzi has given in her "Anecdotes," p. 196, it is much to be wiſhed that we could ſee the whole.

As he opened a note which his ſervant brought to him, he ſaid, "An odd thought ſtrikes me.—We ſhall receive no letters in the grave."

He requeſted three things of Sir Joſhua Reynolds:—To forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him—to read the Bible—and never to uſe his pencil on Sunday. Sir Joſhua readily acquieſced.

Indeed he ſhewed the greateſt anxiety for the religious improvement of his friends, to whom he diſcourſed of its infinite conſequence. He begged of Mr. Hoole to think of what he had ſaid, and to commit it to writing; and upon being afterwards aſſured that this was done, preſſed his hands, and in an earneſt tone, thanked him. Dr. Brockleſby having attended him with the utmoſt aſſiduity and kindneſs as his phyſician and friend, he was peculiarly deſirous that this gentleman ſhould not entertain any looſe ſpeculative notions, but be confirmed in the truths of Chriſtianity, and inſiſted on his writing down in his preſence, as nearly as he could collect it, the import of what paſſed on the ſubject; and Dr. Brockleſby having complied with the requeſt, he made him ſign the paper, and urged him to keep it in his own cuſtody as long as he lived.

Johnſon, with that native fortitude which amidſt all his bodily diſtreſs and mental ſufferings never forſook him, aſked Dr. Brockleſby, as a man in whom he had confidence, to tell him plainly whether he could recover. "Give me (ſaid he) a direct anſwer." The Doctor having firſt aſked him if he could bear the whole truth,

truth, which way ſoever it might lead, and being anſwered that he could, declared in his opinion he could not recover without a miracle. "Then (ſaid Johnſon) I will take no more phyſick, not even my opiates; for I have prayed that I may render up my ſoul to GOD unclouded." In this reſolution he perſevered, and at the ſame time uſed only the weakeſt kind of ſuſtenance. 1784. Ætat. 75.

The Reverend Mr. Strahan, who was the ſon of his friend, and had been always one of his great favourites, had, during Johnſon's laſt illneſs, the ſatisfaction to ſoothe and comfort him. That gentleman's houſe at Iſlington, of which he is Vicar, afforded occaſionally and eaſily an agreeable change of place and freſh air; and he attended alſo upon Johnſon in town in the diſcharge of the ſacred offices of his profeſſion.

Mr. Strahan has given me the agreeable aſſurance, that after being in much agitation, Johnſon became quite compoſed, and continued ſo until his death.

Dr. Brocklesby, who will not be ſuſpected of fanaticiſm, obliged me with the following accounts:

"For ſome time before his death all his fears were calmed and abſorbed by the prevalence of his faith, and his truſt in the merits and *propitiation* of JESUS CHRIST.

"He talked often to me about the neceſſity of faith in the *ſacrifice* of JESUS, as neceſſary beyond all good works whatever for the ſalvation of mankind.

"He preſſed me to ſtudy Dr. Clarke, and to read his ſermons. I aſked him why he preſſed

1784. Ætat. 75. preſſed Dr. Clarke, an Arian *. 'Becauſe (ſaid he) he is fulleſt on the *propitiatory ſacrifice*."

Johnſon having thus in his mind the true Chriſtian ſcheme, at once rational and conſolatory, uniting juſtice and mercy in the Divinity, with the improvement of human nature, while the Holy Sacrament was celebrating in his apartment, fervently uttered this prayer †:

"Almighty and moſt merciful Father, I am now, as to human eyes it ſeems, about to commemorate, for the laſt time, the death of thy Son JESUS CHRIST our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O LORD, that my whole hope and confidence may be in his merits, and thy mercy; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance; make this commemoration available to the confirmation of my faith, the eſtabliſhment of my

* The change of his ſentiments with regard to Dr. Clarke, is thus mentioned to me in a letter from the late Dr. Adams, Maſter of Pembroke College, Oxford.—"The Doctor's prejudices were the ſtrongeſt, and certainly in another ſenſe the weakeſt, that ever poſſeſſed a ſenſible man. You know his extreme zeal for orthodoxy. But did you ever hear what he told me himſelf? That he made it a rule not to admit Dr. Clarke's name in his Dictionary. This, however, wore off. At ſome diſtance of time he adviſed with me what books he ſhould read in defence of the Chriſtian Religion. I recommended 'Clarke's Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion,' as the beſt of the kind; and I find in what is called his 'Prayers and Meditations,' that he was frequently employed in the latter part of his time in reading Clarke's Sermons.

† The Reverend Mr Strahan took care to have it preſerved, and has inſerted it in "Prayers and Meditations."

hope,

hope, and the enlargement of my charity; and make the death of thy Son JESUS CHRIST effectual to my redemption. Have mercy upon me, and pardon the multitude of my offences. Bleſs my friends; have mercy upon all men. Support me, by thy Holy Spirit, in the days of weakneſs, and at the hour of death; and receive me, at my death, to everlaſting happineſs, for the ſake of JESUS CHRIST. Amen." 1784. Ætat. 75.

From my brother Thomas David I have theſe particulars:

"The Doctor, from the time that he was certain his death was near, appeared to be perfectly reſigned, was ſeldom or never fretful or out of temper, and often ſaid to his faithful ſervant, who gave me this account, 'Attend, Francis, to the ſalvation of your ſoul, which is the object of greateſt importance:' he alſo explained to him paſſages in the ſcripture, and ſeemed to have pleaſure in talking of various ſubjects.

"On Monday the 13th of December, the day on which he died, a Miſs Morris, daughter to a particular friend of his, called, and ſaid to Francis, that ſhe begged to be permitted to ſee the Doctor, that ſhe might earneſtly requeſt him to give her his bleſſing. Francis went into the room, followed by the young lady, and delivered the meſſage. The Doctor turned himſelf in the bed, and ſaid, 'GOD bleſs you, my dear!' Theſe were the laſt words he ſpoke.—His difficulty of breathing increaſed till about ſeven o'clock in the evening, when Mr. Barber and Mrs. Deſmoulins, who were ſitting in the room, obſerving that the noiſe he made in breathing had ceaſed, went to the bed, and found he was dead."

About two days after his death, the following very agreeable account was communicated to Mr. Malone, in a letter by the Honourable John Byng, to whom I am much obliged for granting me permiſſion to introduce it in my work.

" Dear Sir,

" Since I ſaw you, I have had a long converſation with Cawſton †, who ſat up with Dr. Johnſon from nine o'clock on Monday morning. And from what I can gather from him, it ſhould ſeem, that Dr. Johnſon was perfectly compoſed, ſteady in hope, and reſigned to death. At the interval of each hour, they aſſiſted him to ſit up in his bed, and move his legs, which were in much pain; when he regularly addreſſed himſelf to fervent prayer; and though ſometimes his voice failed him, his ſenſes never did during that time. The only ſuſtenance he received was cyder and water. He ſaid his mind was prepared, and the time to his diſſolution ſeemed long. At ſix in the morning he enquired the hour, and on being informed, ſaid that all went on regularly, and he felt he had but a few hours to live.

" At ten o'clock in the morning he parted from Cawſton, ſaying, 'You ſhould not detain Mr. Windham's ſervant.—I thank you;—bear my remembrance to your maſter.' Cawſton ſays, that no man could appear more collected, more devout, or leſs terrified at the thoughts of the approaching minute.

* Servant to the Right Honourable William Windham.

" This

" This account, which is ſo much more agreeable than, and ſomewhat different from yours, has given up the ſatisfaction of thinking that the great man died as he lived, full of reſignation, ſtrengthened in faith, and joyful in hope."

A few days before his death he aſked Sir John Hawkins, as one of his executors, where he ſhould be buried; and on being anſwered " Doubtleſs in Weſtminſter Abbey," ſeemed to feel a ſatisfaction very natural to a poet, and indeed, in my opinion, very natural to every man of any imagination, who has no family ſepulchre in which he can be laid with his fathers. Accordingly, upon Monday, December 20, his remains were depoſited in the noble and renowned edifice; and over his grave was placed a large blue flag-ſtone, with this inſcription:

" SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.
" *Obiit* XIII *die Decembris,*
" *Anno Domini*
" M.DCC.LXXXIV.
" *Ætatis ſuæ* LXXV."

His funeral was attended by a reſpectable number of his friends, particularly by many of the members of THE LITERARY CLUB, who were then in town; and was alſo honoured by the preſence of ſeveral of the Reverend Chapter of Weſtminſter. His ſchool-fellow, Dr. Taylor, performed the mournful office of reading the ſervice.

I truſt I ſhall not be accuſed of affectation when I declare, that I find myſelf unable to expreſs all that I felt upon the loſs of ſuch a " Guide, Philoſopher, and Friend." I ſhall therefore not ſay one word of my own, but adopt thoſe of an eminent friend, which he ut-

tered with an abrupt excellence, ſuperiour to all ſtudied compoſition :—" He has made a chaſm, which not only nothing can fill up, but which nothing has a tendency to fill up.—Johnſon is dead.—Let us go to the next beſt.—There is nobody.—No man can be ſaid to put you in mind of Johnſon."

As Johnſon had abundant homage paid to him during his life *, ſo no writer in this nation ever

* Beſides the Dedications to him by Dr. Goldſmith, the Reverend Dr. Franklin, and the Rev. Mr. Wilſon, which I have mentioned according to their dates, there was one by a lady, of a verſification of " Aningait and Ajut," and one by the ingenious Mr. Walker, of his " Rhetorical Grammar." I have introduced into this work ſeveral compliments paid to him in the writings of his contemporaries ; but the number of them is ſo great, that we may fairly ſay that there was almoſt a general tribute.

Let me not be forgetful of the honour done to him by Colonel Myddleton, of Gwaynynog, near Denbigh; who, on the banks of a rivulet in his Park, where Johnſon delighted to ſtand and repeat verſes, erected an urn with the following inſcription :

" This ſpot was often dignified by the preſence of
" SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.
" Whoſe moral writings, exactly conformable to the
precepts of Chriſtianity,
" Give ardour to Virtue and confidence to Truth."

As no inconſiderable circumſtance of his fame, we muſt reckon the extraordinary zeal of the artiſts to extend and perpetuate his image. I can enumerate a buſt by Mr. Nollekens, and the many caſts which are made from it; ſeveral pictures by Sir Joſhua Reynolds ; one by Mr. Zoffani ; and one by Mr. Opie ; and the following engravings of his portrait : 1. One by Cooke, from Sir Joſhua, for the Proprietors' edition of his folio Dictionary.—2. One from ditto by ditto,

ever had ſuch an accumulation of literary honours after his death. A ſermon upon that event was preached in St. Mary's church, Oxford, before the Univerſity, by the Reverend Mr. Agutter, of Magdalen College. The Lives, the Memoirs, the Eſſays, both in proſe and verſe, which have been publiſhed concerning him, would make many volumes. The numerous attacks too upon him, I conſider as making

ditto, for their quarto edition.—3. One from Opie, by Heath, for Harriſon's edition of his Dictionary.—4. One from Nolleken's buſt of him, by Bartolozzi, for Fielding's quarto edition of his Dictionary.—5. One ſmall from Harding, by Trotter, for his "Beauties."—6. One ſmall from Sir Joſhua, by Trotter, for his "Lives of the Poets."—7. One ſmall one from Sir Joſhua, by Hall, for "The Rambler."—8 One ſmall from an original drawing in the poſſeſſion of Mr. John Simeo, etched by Trotter, for another edition of his "Lives of the Poets."—9. One ſmall, no painter's name, etched by Taylor, for his Johnſoniana.—10. One folio whole length, with his oak ſtick, as deſcribed in Boſwell's "Tour," drawn and etched by Trotter.—11. One large mezzotinto from Sir Joſhua, by Doughty.—12. One large Roman head from Sir Joſhua, by Marchi.—13. One octavo, holding a book to his eye, from Sir Joſhua, by Hall, for his works.—14. One ſmall from a drawing from the life, and engraved by Trotter, for his Life publiſhed by Kearſley.—15. One large from Opie, by Mr. Townley, an ingenious engraver now at Berlin. This is one of the fineſt mezzotinto's that ever was executed; and what renders it of extraordinary value, the plate was deſtroyed after four or five impreſſions only were taken off. One of them is in the poſſeſſion of Sir William Scott.—16. One large from Sir Joſhua's firſt picture of him, by Heath, for his work.—17. And one for Lavater's Eſſay on Phyſiognomy, in which Johnſon's countenance is analyſed upon the principles of that fanciful writer.

part

part of his conſequence, upon the principle which he himſelf ſo well knew and aſſerted. Many who trembled at his preſence were forward in aſſault when they no longer apprehended danger. When one of his little pragmatical foes was inviduouſly ſnarling at his fame, the Reverend Dr. Parr exclaimed, with his uſual bold animation, "Aye, now that the old lion is dead, every aſs thinks he may kick at him."

A monument for him in Weſtminſter-Abbey was reſolved upon ſoon after his death, and has been ſupported by a moſt reſpectable contribution; but the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's having come to a reſolution of admitting monuments there, upon a liberal and magnificent plan, that cathedral was afterwards fixed on as the place, and in the cathedral of his native city of Lichfield a ſmaller one is to be erected. To compoſe his epitaph has excited the warmeſt competition of genius. If *laudari à laudato viro* be praiſe which is highly eſtimable, I ſhould not forgive myſelf were I to omit the following ſepulchral verſes on the authour of THE ENGLISH DICTIONARY, written by the Right Honourable Henry Flood;

"No need of Latin or of Greek to grace
"Our JOHNSON'S mem'ry, and inſcribe his
"grave;
"His native language claims this mournful
ſpace,
"To pay the Immortality he gave."

The character of SAMUEL JOHNSON has, I truſt, been ſo developed in the courſe of this work, that they who have honoured it with a peruſal, may be conſidered as well acquainted with

with him. As, however, it may be expected that I ſhould collect into one view the capital and diſtinguiſhing features of this extraordinary man, I ſhall endeavour to acquit myſelf of that part of my biographical undertaking *, however difficult it may be to do that which many of my readers will do better for themſelves.

His figure was large and well formed, and his countenance of the caſt of an ancient ſtatue; yet his appearance was rendered ſtrange and ſomewhat uncouth, by convulſive cramps, by the ſcars of that diſtemper which it was once imagined the royal touch could cure, and by a ſlovenly mode of dreſs. He had the uſe only of one eye; yet ſo much does mind govern and even ſupply the deficiency of organs, that his viſual perceptions, as far as they extended, were uncommonly quick and accurate. So morbid was his temperament, that he never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous uſe of his limbs; when he walked, it was like the ſtruggling gait of one in fetters; when he rode, he had no command or direction of his horſe, but was carried as if in a balloon. That with his habits of life he ſhould live ſeventy-five years, is a proof that an inherent *vivida vis* is a powerful preſervative of the human frame.

Man is in general made up of contradictory qualities, and theſe will ever ſhew themſelves in ſtrange ſucceſſion, where a conſiſtency in ap-

* As I certainly do not ſee any reaſon to give a different character of my illuſtrious friend now, from what I formerly gave, the greateſt part of the ſketch of him in my "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," is here adopted.

pearance

pearance at leaſt, if not in reality, has not been attained by long habits of philoſophical diſcipline. In proportion to the native vigour of the mind, the contradictory qualities will be the more prominent, and more difficult to be adjuſted; and therefore we are not to wonder, that Johnſon exhibited an eminent example of this remark which I have made upon human nature. At different times he ſeemed a different man, in ſome reſpects; not, however, in any great or eſſential article, upon which he had fully employed his mind and ſettled certain principles of duty, but only in his manners, and in diſplays of argument and fancy in his talk. He was prone to ſuperſtition, but not to credulity. Though his imagination might incline him to a belief of the marvellous and the myſterious, his vigorous reaſon examined the evidence with jealouſy. He was a ſincere and zealous Chriſtian, of high Church-of-England and monarchical principles, which he would not ſuffer tamely to be queſtioned; and had perhaps, at an early period, narrowed his mind ſomewhat too much, both as to religion and politicks. His being impreſſed with the danger of extreme latitude in either, though he was of a very independent ſpirit, occaſioned his appearing ſomewhat unfavourable to the prevalence of that noble freedom of ſentiment which is the beſt poſſeſſion of man. Nor can it be denied, that he had many prejudices; which, however, frequently ſuggeſted many of pointed ſayings, that rather ſhew a playfulneſs of fancy than any ſettled malignity. He was ſteady and inflexible in maintaining the obligations of religion and morality, both from a regard for the order of ſociety, and from a veneration

ration for the Great Source of all order; correct, nay ſtern in his taſte; hard to pleaſe, and eaſily offended; impetuous and irritable in his temper, but of a moſt humane and benevolent heart *, which ſhewed itſelf not only in a moſt liberal charity, as far as his circumſtances would allow, but in a thouſand inſtances of active benevolence. He was afflicted with a bodily diſeaſe which made him reſtleſs and fretful, and with a conſtitutional melancholy, the clouds of which darkened the brightneſs of his fancy, and gave a gloomy caſt to his whole courſe of thinking: we therefore ought not to wonder at his ſallies of impatience and paſſion at any time, eſpecially when provoked by obtruſive ignorance or preſuming petulance; and allowance muſt be made for his uttering haſty and ſatirical ſallies, even againſt his beſt friends. And ſurely, when it is conſidered that "amidſt ſickneſs and ſorrow" he exerted his faculties in ſo many works for the benefit of mankind, and particularly that he achieved the great and admirable Dictionary of our language, we muſt be aſtoniſhed at his reſolution. The ſolemn text of "him to whom much is given, much will be required," ſeems to have been ever preſent to his mind in a rigorous ſenſe, and to have

* In the *Olla Podrida*, a collection of Eſſays publiſhed at Oxford, there is an excellent paper upon the character of Johnſon, ſaid to be written by the Reverend Dr. Horne, now Biſhop of Norwich. The following paſſage is eminently happy: "To reject wiſdom, becauſe the perſon of him who communicates it is uncouth, and his manners are inelegant; ——what is it, but to throw away a pine-apple, and aſſign for a reaſon the roughneſs of its coat?"

made

made him diſſatisfied with his labours and acts of goodneſs, however comparatively great; ſo that the unavoidable conſciouſneſs of his ſuperiority was in that reſpect a cauſe of diſquiet. He ſuffered ſo much from this, and from the gloom which perpetually haunted him, and made ſolitude frightful, that it may be ſaid of him, "If in this life only he had hope, he was of all men the moſt miſerable." He loved praiſe when it was brought to him; but was too proud to ſeek for it. He was ſomewhat ſuſceptible of flattery. As he was general and unconfined in his ſtudies, he cannot be conſidered as maſter of any one particular ſcience; but he had accumulated a vaſt and various collection of learning and knowledge, which was ſo arranged in his mind, as to be ever in readineſs to be brought forth. But his ſuperiority over other learned men conſiſted chiefly in what may be called the art of thinking, the art of uſing his mind; a certain continual power of ſeizing the uſeful ſubſtance of all that he knew, and exhibiting it in a clear and forcible manner; ſo that knowledge which we often ſee to be no better than lumber in men of dull underſtanding, was in him true, evident, and actual wiſdom. His moral precepts are practical; for they are drawn from an intimate acquaintance with human nature. His maxims carry conviction; for they are founded on the baſis of common ſenſe. His mind was ſo full of imagery, that he might have been perpetually a poet; yet it is remarkable, that however rich his proſe is in that reſpect, the poetical pieces which he wrote were in general not ſo, but rather ſtrong ſentiment and acute obſervation, conveyed in good verſe, particularly in heroick couplets. Though uſually

grave

grave and even awful in his deportment, he poſſeſſed uncommon and peculiar powers of wit and humour; he frequently indulged himſelf in colloquial pleaſantry; and the heartieſt merriment was often enjoyed in his company; with this great advantage, that as it was entirely free from any poiſonous tincture of vice or impiety, it was ſalutary to thoſe who ſhared in it. He had accuſtomed himſelf to ſuch accuracy in his common converſation *, that he at all times delivered

* Though a perfect reſemblance of Johnſon is not to be found in any age, parts of his character are admirably expreſſed by Clarendon, in drawing that of Lord Falkland, whom the noble and maſterly hiſtorian deſcribes at his ſeat near Oxford:—Such an immenſeneſs of wit, ſuch a ſolidity of judgement, ſo infinite a fancy, bound in by a moſt logical ratiocination.—His acquaintance was cultivated by the moſt polite and accurate men, ſo that his houſe was a Univerſity in leſs volume, whither they came not ſo much for repoſe as ſtudy, and to examine and refine thoſe groſſer propoſitions, which lazineſs and conſent made current in converſation.

Bayle's account of *Menage* may alſo be quoted as exceedingly applicable to the great ſubject of this work.—"His illuſtrious friends erected a very glorious monument to him in the collection entitled *Menagiana*. Thoſe, who judge of things aright, will confeſs that this collection is very proper to ſhew the extent of genius and learning which was the character of Menage. And I may be bold to ſay, that *the excellent works he publiſhed will not diſtinguiſh him from other learned men ſo advantageouſly as this*. To publiſh books of great learning, to make Greek and Latin verſes exceedingly well turned, is not a common talent, I own; neither is it extremely rare. It is incomparably more difficult to find men who can furniſh diſcourſe about an infinite number of things, and who can diverſify them an hundred ways. How many authors are there, who are admired for their works, on account

livered himſelf with a force, and elegant choice of expreſſion, the effect of which was aided by his having a loud voice, and a ſlow and deliberate utterance. He united a moſt logical head with a moſt fertile imagination, which gave him an extraordinary advantage in arguing; for he could reaſon cloſe or wide, as he ſaw beſt for the moment. Exulting in his intellectual ſtrength and dexterity, he could, when he pleaſed, be the greateſt ſophiſt that ever contended in the liſts of declamation; and from a ſpirit of contradiction, and a delight in ſhewing his powers, he would often maintain the wrong ſide with equal warmth and ingenuity: ſo that, when there was an audience, his real opinions could ſeldom be gathered from his talk; though when

account of the vaſt learning that is diſplayed in them, who are not able to ſuſtain a converſation. Thoſe, who know Menage only by his books, might think he reſembled thoſe learned men: but if you ſhew the MENAGIANA, you diſtinguiſh him from them, and make him known by a talent which is given to very few learned men. There it appears that he was a man who ſpoke off hand a thouſand good things. His memory extended to what was ancient and modern; to the court and to the city,; to the dead and to the living languages; to things ſerious and things jocoſe; in a word, to a thouſand ſorts of ſubjects. That which appeared a trifle to ſome readers of the *Menagiana*, who did not conſider circumſtances, cauſed admiration in other readers, who minded the difference between what a man ſpeaks without preparation, and that which he prepares for the preſs. And therefore we cannot ſufficiently commend the care which his illuſtrious friends took to erect to him a monument ſo capable of giving immortal glory. They were not obliged to rectify what they had heard him ſay; for in ſo doing they had not been faithful hiſtorians of his converſation."

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FAC SIMILES of Dr. JOHNSO

When at School in his 16

After your death, the lavish
Will quickly drive away hi
The wife you kept with so
Along the marble floor she

Sam'

In his 35th year.

Sir

Your most obedient

and

most humble Servant

Sam: Johnson

Mr

Your mo

Sa

Dea

NSON'S *hand writing:*

is 16.th year.

uvish hair
y his wo'd,
th so much care
r shall flow.
Sam.l Johnson

In the last year of his life,
& a few days before he died.

Madam,

— most humble Servt.

Sam.l Johnson
Dec.r 2 1784.

he was in company with a ſingle friend, he would diſcuſs a ſubject with genuine fairneſs. But he was too conſcientious to make errour permanent and pernicious, by deliberately writing it; and in all his numerous works he earneſtly inculcated what appeared to him to be the truth. His piety was conſtant, and was the ruling principle of all his conduct; and the more we conſider his character, we ſhall be the more diſpoſed to regard him with reverence and admiration.

THE END.